

Francis THE Goodwill
INVISIBLE SPY.

B Y

EXPLORABILIS.

IN TWO VOLUMES,

VOL. I.

A NEW EDITION.



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B O O K I.

C H A P. I.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

To the P U B L I C.

I have observed, that when a new book begins to make a noise in the world, every one is desirous of becoming acquainted with the author; and this impatience increases the more he endeavours to conceal himself. --- I expect to hear an hundred different names ascribed to the INVISIBLE,---some of which I should, perhaps, be proud of, others as much ashamed to own.--- Some will doubtless take me for a philosopher,--- others for a fool;---with some I shall pass for a man of

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pleasure,

pleasure, — with others for a stoic ; — some will look upon me as a courtier, — others as a patriot : but whether I am any one of these, or whether I am even a man or a woman, they will find it, after all their conjectures, as difficult to discover as the longitude.

I think it therefore a duty incumbent on my good-nature to put an early stop to such fruitless inquisitions, and also at the same time to satisfy, in some measure, the curiosity of the Public, by giving an account of the means by which I attained the Gift of Invisibility I possess.

Know then, gentle reader, that in the former part of my life it was my good fortune to do a signal service to a certain venerable person since dead : — he was descended from the ancient Magi of the Chaldeans, inherited their wisdom, and was well versed in all the mystic secrets of their art. — Besides his gratitude for the good offices I had done him, he seem'd to have found something in my humour and manner of behaviour that extremely pleased him ; — he would often have me with him, and entertained me with discourses on things of which otherwise I should have had no idea.

But it was not long that I enjoyed this benefit ; — he sent for me one day to let me know he was much indisposed, and desired I would come immediately to him : — I went, and found him not as I expected, in bed, but sitting in an easy chair. — After the first salutations were over, and I had placed myself pretty near him, — ‘ My good friend,’ said he, taking hold of my hand, ‘ I feel that I must shortly quit this busy world ; — the silver cord is looened, — the golden bowl is broken, — every thing within me hastens to a speedy



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' speedy dissolution ; and I am willing to see you once more before I set out on my journey to that land of shades,—as *Hamlet* truly says,

' That undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
' No traveller returns.'

' As the remembrance of you, continued he,
' will certainly accompany me beyond the grave,
' I would wish, methinks, to hold some place in
' yours while you remain on earth, to the end that
' I may not be quite a stranger to you when we
' meet in eternity.—I have no land, nor tene-
' ments, nor gold nor silver to bequeath, yet am
' not destitute of something which may be equally
' worthy your acceptance.'

Then, after a little pause, — ' Take this,' added he, giving me a key, ' it will admit you into a closet which no one but myself has ever entered ; — I call it my Cabinet of Curiosities ; and I believe you will find such things there as will deserve that name ; — chuse from among them any one that most suits your fancy, and accept it as a token of my love.'

He said no more, but rang his bell for a servant, who, by his orders, conducted me by a narrow winding staircase to the top of the house, and left me at a little door, which I opened with the key that had been given me, and found myself in a small square room, built after the manner of a turret : — all the furniture was an old wicker chair, with a piece of blanket thrown carelessly over it, I suppose to defend the sage from the air when he sat there to study : — near it was placed a table, not less antiquated, with two globes ; — a standish with some paper, and several books in

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manuscript ; but wrote in characters too unintelligible for me to comprehend any part of what they contained.—Just in the middle of the cieling hung a pretty large crystal ball, filled with a shining yellowish powder, and this inscription pasted on it:

The ILLUSIVE POWDER.

‘ A SMALL quantity of this powder, blown through the quill of a Porcupine when the Moon is in Aries, raises splendid visions in the people’s eyes ; and, if apply’d when the same planet is in Cancer, spreads universal terror and dismay.’

I easily perceived that this was one of the Curiosities my friend had mentioned, and a great one indeed it was ; but as I had neither interest nor inclination to impose upon my fellow-creatures, I judged it fitter for the possession of some one or other of the mighty rulers of the earth.

I then turned towards the walls, which were all hung round with telescopes, — horoscopes, — microscopes, — talismans, — multipliers, — magnifiers of all degrees and sizes, — loadstones cut in various forms, and great numbers of mathematical instruments ; — but these, as I was altogether ignorant of their uses, I passed slightly over, till I came to a hand-bell, which having the appearance of no other than such as I had ordinarily seen at a lady’s tea-table, I should have taken no notice of, but for a label prefixed to it, on which I found these words :

The SYMPATHETIC BELL,

‘ THE least tinkle of which not only sets all the bells of the whole country, be it of ever so large extent, in motion, without the help of men to

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‘ to pull the ropes, but also makes them play
whatever changes the party is pleased to nominate.’

Though I thought art could produce no greater wonder than this Bell, yet I felt no strong desire of becoming master of it; but proceeded to examine what farther rarities this extraordinary cabinet would present.—The next I took notice of was a phial, not much unlike those which are commonly sold in the shops with French hungary-water;—it had this inscription:

S A L T S O F M E D I T A T I O N,

‘ WHICH, held close to the nostrils for the space of three seconds and a half, corrects all vague and wandering thoughts, fixes the mind, and enables it to ponder justly on any subject that requires deliberation.’

This beneficial secret I also rejected, through a mere point of conscience, as thinking it would be a much better service to mankind if in the possession of the divines, lawyers, politicians, or physicians, especially the two last mentioned, as it might prevent the one from engaging in any enterprize they have not abilities or courage to go thro’ with,—and the other from falling into those gross mistakes they are frequently guilty of in relation to the case of the diseased..

The next, and indeed the first thing that raised in me any covetous emotions, was the apparatus of a belt, but seemed no more than a collection of atoms gathered together in that form, and playing in the sun-beams.—I could not persuade myself it was a real substance, till I took it down, and then found it so light, that if I shut my eyes I knew not that I had any thing in my hand. The label annexed to it had these words:

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The BELT of INVISIBILITY,

‘ WHICH, fastened round the body, next the skin, no sooner becomes warm, than it renders the party invisible to all human eyes.’

A little farther, on the same side of the wall, was placed a Tablet,- or Pocket-book, which, on examining, I found was composed of a clear glassy substance, firm, yet thin as the bubbles which we sometimes see rise on the surface of the waters ;— it was malleable, and doubled in many foldings, so that, when shut, it seemed very small ; but when extended, was more long and broad than any sheet I ever saw of imperial paper ;—its uses were decyphered in the following inscription :

The WONDREUL TABLET,

‘ WHICH, in whatever place it is spread open, receives the impression of every word that is spoken, in as distinct a manner as if engraved, and can no-way be expunged, but by the breath of a virgin, of so pure an innocence as not to have even thought on the difference of sexes ;— after such a one, if such a one is to be found, has blown pretty hard upon it for the space of seven seconds and three quarters, she must wipe it gently with the first down under the left wing of an unfledged swan, plucked when the Moon is in three degrees of Virgo : — this done, the Tablet will be entirely free from all former memorandums, and fit to take a new impression.

‘ Note, that the virgin must exceed twelve years of Age.’

I was very much divided between these two ;— the Belt of Invisibility put a thousand rambles into my head, which promised discoveries highly flattering

tering to the inquisitiveness of my humour ; but then the Tablet, recording every thing I should hear spoken, which I confess my memory is too defective to retain, filled me with the most ardent desire of becoming master of so inestimable a treasure : — in fine, — I wanted both ; — so encroaching is the temper of mankind, that the grant of one favour generally paves the way for soliciting a second.

While I was in this dilemma a stratagem occurred, which I hesitated not to put in practice, and found it answer to my wishes ; — I took both the Belt and Tablet in my hand ; and having carefully locked the door of the cabinet, returned to the Adept ; — he saw the Belt, which being long, hung over my wrist, but not perceiving I had the Tablet, — ‘ The choice you have made, said he with a smile, confirms the truth of what I always believed, that curiosity is the most prevailing passion of the human mind.’

‘ However just that position may be, reply’d I, that propensity is not strong enough in me, to make me able to decide between the wonderful Tablet and the no less wonderful Belt ; — they appear to me of such equal estimation, that whenever I would fix on the one, the benefits of the other rise up in opposition to my choice ; and I know not which of the two I should receive with most pleasure, or leave with the least regret ; — I have therefore brought both down to you, and intreat you will determine for me.’

I soon perceived he understood my meaning perfectly well ; for, after a little pause, — ‘ When I made you the offer, said he, of whatever you liked best among my collection of curiosities, I

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intended not that your acceptance of one thing
should render you unhappy thro' the want of another;—take then, I beseech you, both the Belt
and the Tablet,—you shall leave neither of them
behind you ;—nor do I wonder you should desire
to unite them ;—they are, in a manner, conco-
mitant ; and the satisfaction that either of them
would be able to procure, would be incomplete
without the assistance of the other.'

Thus was I put in possession of a treasure, which I thought the more valuable, as I was pretty cer-
tain no other person, in this kingdom at least, en-
joy'd the like ;—after making proper acknowledg-
ments to the obliging donor, I took my leave, and return'd home with a heart overflowing with delight.

I was not long before I made trial of my Belt,
and found the effects as the label had described : I
also opened my Tablet, — spoke, and saw my
~~wor's immediately imprinted on it ;—and then pro-~~
cured some Swan's-down, according to direction,
and intreated several young ladies to breathe upon it
one after another ; but though I dare answer for
their virtue, the favour they did me was in
vain—the impression remain'd still indelible.

Indeed, when I began to consider maturely on
the conditions prescribed in the label on the Tablet,
I was sensible that it was not enough for a virgin to
be perfectly innocent, she must also be equally ig-
norant, to be qualified for the performance of the
task required ;—and not to have once thought on
the difference of sexes, seem'd a thing scarce pos-
sible after six or seven years of age at most, and
would have been as great a prodigy as either of
those that had been bestowed upon me by the Adept.

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What would I not have given for such a one as Dorinda in Shakespear's Enchanted Island; but such a hope being vain, I was extremely puzzled, and knew not what to do: at last, however, a lucky thought got me over the difficulty; — it was this: I prevailed, for a small sum of money, with a very poor widow, who had several children, to let me have a girl of about three years old, to bring up and educate as I judged proper; — I then committed my little purchase to the care of an elderly woman, whose discretion I had experienced; — I communicated to her the whole of my design, and instructed her how to proceed in order to render it effectual.

The little creature was kept in an upper room, which had no window in it but a sky-light in the roof of the house, so could be witness of nothing that passed below; — her diet was thin, and very sparing; — she was not permitted to sleep above half the time generally allowed for repose, and saw no living thing but the old woman who lay with her, gave her food, and did all that was necessary about her.

I frequently visited them in my Invisibility, and was highly pleased and diverted with the diligence of my good old woman; — she not only obeyed my orders with the utmost punctuality, but did many things of her own accord, which, tho' very requisite, I had not thought of. — To prevent her young charge from falling into any of those distempers which the want of exercise sometimes occasions, she contrived to make a swing for her across the room, taught her to play at battledore and shuttlecock, — to toss the ball and catch it at the rebound, and such like childish gambols, which both delighted her mind, and kept her limbs in a continual motion.

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This conduct, and this regimen constantly observed, maintained my virgin's purity inviolate, as I did not fail to make an essay in a few days after she entered into her thirteenth year, and the success of my endeavours made me not regret the pains I had been at for such a length of time.

Now it runs into my head that some people will not credit one word of all this; for as there are many who believe too much, there are yet many more who will believe nothing at all but what their own shallow reason enables them to comprehend.

— Well, — let them judge as they think fit, — let them puzzle their wise noddles till they ake, — I shall sit snug in my Invisibility while they lose half the pleasure, and, it may be, all the improvement of my lucubrations.

But those who resolve to pursue me through the following pages with an ingenuous candour, I flatter myself will lose nothing by the chace; — they will find me in various places, though not in so many as perhaps they may expect; — they would in vain seek me at court-balls, — city-feasts, — the halls of justice, or meetings for elections; — nor do I much haunt the opera or play-houses: — in fine, I avoid all crouds, — all mixed assemblies, except the masquerade and Venetian balls. — I am a member of the established church; but as I am not ashamed of appearing at divine worship, never put on my Invisible Belt when I go there. I revere regal authority, but seldom visit the cabinet of princes; because they are generally so filled with a thick fog, that the crystalline texture of my Tablets could not receive what was said there, so as to be read distinctly; — nor do I much care to venture myself among their ministers of state, or any of their under-working tools; the floors of their rooms,

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rooms, in which their cabals are held, are composed of such slippery materials that the least *faux pas* might endanger my Invisibility, if not my neck. I should be more frequently with the military gentlemen, but that they are so apt to draw their swords without occasion, that while they think they are fencing in the air, they might chance to cut my Belt asunder; — and what a figure I should make, when one half of me was discover'd, and the other was concealed. I will not mention the consequence such a fight might produce in some of them.

But it would be of little importance to the Publick to be told where I am not, unless they also know where I am: — have patience then, good people, and you shall be satisfied.

Sometimes I step in at one or other of those gaming-houses, which are above law, by being under the protection of the great; but I seldom stay long in any of them, as I can see nothing there but what I have seen an hundred times before in those lesser assemblies of the same kind, that have been so justly put down by authority.

Sometimes I peep into the closet of an antiquarian, where I find matter enough to excite both my pity and contempt. What greater instance can we have of the depravity of human nature than in a rich curmudgeon, who, while he grumbles to allow his family necessary food, chearfully unties his bags and pours out fifty, or it may be an hundred guineas, for the purchase of a bit of old copper, — only because a fellow of more wit than honesty tells him it was found under the ruins of an ancient wall, where it had been buried ever since the time of Julius Cæsar or Severus.

Sometimes too I amuse myself with turning over the collection of a virtuoso, where I am always filled with the utmost astonishment, at finding sums sufficient to endow an hospital lavished in the purchase of wings of butterflies, — the shells of fishes, — dried reptiles, — the paw of some exotic animal, and such like baubles, neither pleasing in their prospects, nor useful in their natures.

Sometimes I make one at the levee of a rich heir, just arrived from his travels to the possession of an overgrown estate; where I cannot help trembling for the future fate of the poor youth, on seeing him besieged with a crowd of marriage-brokers, — pleasure-brokers, — exchange-brokers, — lawyers, gamesters, — French taylors, — Dresden milliners, petitioning harlots, — congratulating poets; in fine, with sharpers, flatterers, and sycophants of every kind.

Sometimes I mingle in the route of a woman of quality — see who wins, — who loses at play, and in what manner ladies are frequently obliged to pay their debts of honour.

When I have nothing better to employ my time, I loiter away some hours in St. James's Park, Kensington-gardens, or at Vaux-hall, Ranelagh, and Mary-le-bon, and am often witness of some scenes exciting present mirth and future reflection.

But my chief delight is in the drawing-rooms of some celebrated toasts, whence I often steal into their bed-chambers; but don't be frightened, ladies, I never carry my inspections farther than the ruelle.

These

These are some few particulars of the tour I have made ; — to give the whole detail would be too tedious.—I shall therefore only say, that wherever I am found, I shall always be found a lover of morality, and no enemy to religion, or any of its worthy professors, of what sect or denomination soever.

I And now, reader, having let thee into the secret of my history, as far as it is convenient for me to reveal, I shall leave thee to enjoy the advantage of those discoveries my Invisibility enabled me to make.

C H A P. II.

Contains some premises very necessary to be observed by every reader ; and also an account of the author's first Invisible Visit.

IT was in the beginning of that season of the year which affords most food for an enquiring mind, that I had got all things in order to sally forth on my Invisible Progressions ; — the august representatives of the whole body of the people were just ready to assemble ; — the expounders of the law were hurrying to Westminster-hall, and those of the gospel to pay their compliments at St. James's ; — the ships of war were mostly moored, and their gallant commanders had quitted the rough athletic toil for the soft charms of ease and luxury ; — the land heroes, who having no employment for their swords, had passed their days in rural sports, now hunted after a different sort of game at the theatres and masquerades ; — frequent consultations were held at the toilets of the ladies, on ways and mean

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means to outshine each other in the circle ; former amours were now revived, and even new ones every day commenced :—madam Intelligence, with her thousand and ten thousand emissaries, all loaded with reports, some true, some false, flew swiftly through each quarter of this great metropolis ; and had every pore of every human body been an ear, they all might have been fully gratified.

Besides the gratification of a darling passion, I had another, and much more justifiable reason for the value I set upon the legacy of my departed friend ; which is this,—I have it in my power to pluck off the mask of hypocrisy from the seeming saint ; — to expose vice and folly in all their various modes and attitudes ; to strip a bad action of all the specious pretences made to conceal or palliate it, and shew it in its native ugliness. At the same time, I have also the means to rescue injured innocence from the cruel attacks begun by envy and scandal, and propagated by prejudice and ill-nature. In a word, I am enabled, by this precious gift, to set both things and persons in their proper colours ; and not in such as, either through malice or partial favour, they are frequently made to appear.

I should be sorry, however, if any thing I have said should give the reader occasion to imagine I am going to present him with a book of scandal ; —no ; the secrets of families, and characters of persons, shall be always sacred with me ; I shall give no man the opportunity of indulging a malicious pleasure of laughing at his neighbour's faults : ---my aim in this work is not to ridicule, but reform. I would touch the hearts, not call a blush upon the face ; and as few people have errors so peculiar to themselves, as there are not many guilty

guilty of the like, if the offender keeps his own counsel, he may very well pass undistinguished among the crowd of others equally culpable.

Verramond is justly accounted one of the most accomplished gentlemen of the present age;—the gracefulness of his person,—the engaging manner of his conversation,—his fine address and uncommon capacity, make his company desired by the young and gay part of the world; as his great learning and perfect knowledge of men and things render him the oracle of the more grave and serious: I had frequently the honour of meeting him at several places where I visited, and found nothing in him which could in the least contradict those high ideas fame had given me of him..

It was therefore natural for me to take the advantage of my Gift of Invisibility, in order to view this great person in his most retired moments;—I mean, when he was alone, and divested of all those modes and ceremonies, which often disguise the real man, and shew him to the Public far different from what he is..

Accordingly, the first visit I made in my Belt, was at his house: I slipt in as soon as I saw the door opened,—went up stairs, and passed through several rooms 'till I came to that where he was fitting;—I found him with a book in his hand, on which he seemed very intent; I doubted not but it was a treatise of philosophy, or some other piece of learning or wit, suitable to the capacity of so great a genius; but how much was I surprised, when, looking over his shoulder, I perceived it was Hoyle's method of playing the Game of Whist! — He appeared more than ordinarily taken up with one page, for he read it over three or four times,

times, then started up from his chair, and throwing the book from him in a rage, — ‘ Curse on this ‘ stuff, cry’d he, it is good for nothing but to ‘ teach a man how to undo himself with more art.’ After walking for some minutes backwards and forwards in the room, with a disordered motion, he flung himself into his chair, and fell into a profound reverie, in which I knew not how long he might have continued, if he had not been rouied from it by the approach of a person, who I presently found was his steward.

The busines on which this man came into the room was no way pleasing to Verramond; but because I would avoid the troublesome repetitions of, — said he, — and reply’d he, — and resum’d the other, and such like introductions to every speech, I shall present all those dialogues, which are proper to be communicated to the Public, in the same manner as in the printed copies of theatrical performances.

Steward. ‘ My lord, the several tradesmen, whom your lordship order’d to come this morning, are below, and wait your lordship’s commands.

Verramond. ‘ I have no commands for them at present, so send them away.

Steward. ‘ Shall I bid them attend your lordship to-morrow?

Verramond. ‘ Aye, — to morrow six months if you will; for I shall scarce have any busines with them before.

Steward. ‘ My lord, I told them they should all be paid off this morning. — What excuse can I make to them for such a disappointment?

Verramond. ‘ E’en what you will; — if you can invent nothing better, you may tell them that you ly’d when you made that promise in my name.

Steward.

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Steward. ‘ Your lordship knows it was by your own order I made them that promise ; and that you sent me into the city yesterday for money, which I doubted not but was to make good what I had told them : — if your lordship pleases to consider, it is now a long time since they brought in their bills, and they have had a great deal of patience.

Verramond. ‘ Rot their patience. — Do you think to make a merit to me of their patience ? — Go, I say, send them away, and let me hear no more of them.’

The tone in which Verramond uttered these words was so austere, that the honest domestic had not courage to reply, but left the room immediately, probably to receive no softer treatment below from those he was compell’d to disappoint, than he had just met with above for attempting to intercede in their behalf.

Lord Macro was presently after introduced ; — the late sullenness of Verramond seem’d now entirely dissipated ; — whatever was in his heart his countenance wore only smiles, and he ran to receive him with open arms, and all the testimonies of the most perfect satisfaction ; — and yet, as I soon found by the discourse they had together, this very Macro, the night before, had won of him at play fifteen hundred pounds, which was the sum he had set apart for the payment of his creditors. — Their conversation turning wholly upon gaming, a subject neither entertaining nor improving, I shall give my readers no more than a bare specimen of it.

Lord Macro, ‘ My dear Verramond, I could not be easy till I saw you this morning. — I thought you left the company somewhat abruptly last night, and

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‘ and was afraid your ill luck had given you some chagrin.

Verramond. ‘ Not in the least; my dear Macro, — I never think any thing lost that a friend gains ; but I remembered that I had some letters to write, otherwise would have staid and trusted fortune with a brace or two of hundreds farther.

Lord Macro. ‘ As it is an honour to get the better of your lordship in any thing, so it will be no disgrace to be overcome by a person of such superior abilities ; therefore I am ready to give you your revenge when you think fit.

Verramond. ‘ Nay, as for that, Macro, it must be confessed you know that game better than I.’

Here followed a long succession of mutual compliments on each other’s skill in play, of which growing heartily tired, I was beginning to think of leaving the place, and should have done so, if the appearance of the steward a second time had not made me expect some change in the scene ; — his errand, and the success it met with, will not perhaps appear so extraordinary to those unacquainted with the modish way of thinking, as it then did to me.

Steward. ‘ Farmer Hobson is below, my lord ; — the poor man has rode hard all night, on purpose to reach town this morning, and lay his miserable condition before your lordship.

Verramond. ‘ Pish, what have I to do with his condition ?

Steward. ‘ He says, my lord, that his crop prov’d so bad last year, that he had scarce where-with to stock the ground ; — that Mr. Hard-meat, your lordship’s steward in the country, is very sensible of his misfortunes ; yet, tho’ there are but five quarters due, threatens to turn him out.

THE INVISIBLE SPY. 19

‘ out of the farm next week ; — he therefore
‘ humbly hopes your lordship will take compassion
‘ on him, as he has six small children, and his wife
‘ now lying-in of the seventh.

Verramond. ‘ What business have such fellows
‘ to get children ? — Does he expect my rent shall
‘ go for the maintenance of his brats ?

Steward. ‘ He begs your lordship to consider,
‘ that for these eleven years he has rented the farm,
‘ he has always paid your lordship honestly, and
‘ does not doubt, through Providence, but to do
‘ so still, if your lordship is pleased to have pa-
‘ tience till next harvest is over, and not ruin him
‘ at once.

Verramond. ‘ Let me hear no more of this stuff.
‘ — I leave all to Mr. Hardmeat ; he knows what
‘ he has to do, and I will give myself no trouble
‘ about it.’

The steward, with whose good-nature I was in-
finitely charm'd, had his mouth open to urge some-
thing farther in behalf of the distress'd farmer, but
was prevented by a servant that instant coming in
and presenting a letter to Verramond, who then
bid him go down and tell the unhappy suppliant
he might return home, for there was no answer to
be given to his complaint.

Verramond would not open the letter he had just
received 'till he knew who sent it ; but on his
footman's informing him it came from Mr. Gamble,
he hastily broke the seal, and found the contents as
follows :

‘ My ever honour'd lord,
‘ I HAPPEN'D to be engag'd last night at a house
‘ where the constable with his posse made a
‘ forcible entrance, demolished our tables, put most

‘ of the company to flight, and seized the rest ; I
‘ was unluckily one of the last class, and committed
‘ to durance vile, as Hudibras says, as your lord-
‘ ship will perceive by the date hereof.

‘ A person here has undertaken, for a fee of five
‘ guineas, to procure my immediate discharge, and
‘ I do not doubt by the method he proposes but
‘ he is able to do it. — I am not, however, at
‘ present, master of as many shillings, nor can any
‘ way raise the money he demands, having been
‘ obliged the day before this accident befell me, to
‘ leave my watch, linen, and best apparel, at Mr.
‘ Grub’s, in trust for a small sum required of me
‘ by the parish-officers, on account of a bastard
‘ child, which a wench of the town has done me
‘ the honour to swear I am the father of.

‘ All my hopes, therefore, of getting out of
‘ limbo are in your lordship’s generosity, which if
‘ you vouchsafe to grant me this one more proof
‘ of, I shall, if possible, be more than ever,

‘ With the most profound duty,

‘ Dear patron,

Bridewell.

‘ Your devoted vassal,

‘ RICHARD GAMBLE.

‘ P. S. I had forgot to acquaint your lordship,
‘ that I shall have need of more than the above-
‘ mentioned sum for discharging the fees of this
‘ cursed hole, without the payment of which I
‘ cannot be released.’

Verramond hesitated not a moment to comply with this request, nor even whether he should exceed what was desired of him : --- he drew out his purse, put ten guineas into the footman’s hands, and ordered him to run directly to Bridewell ; --- carry

carry that money to Mr. Gamble, with his compliments, and let him know he should be glad to see him as soon as he had recovered his liberty.

Who will say now that Verramond is not liberal? --- but alas,---how ill placed an act of benevolence was this! --- Was it not rather caprice than true charity, which induced him to bestow this money to save a common sharper from the punishment he justly merited; yet at the same time refuse an honest industrious tenant a small respite of payment, tho' to preserve him and his poor family from destruction? --- But Gamble was a necessary person at a gaming-table; ---he was of importance to his pleasure that way, and the farmer being only regarded for the rent he paid, when deficient in that must be thrown out like a piece of useless lumber, and his place occupied by some one who promised to be of greater utility.

Yet do I not think such a conduct is always to be ascribed to the fault of nature. --- Verramond has certainly the seeds of virtue and honour in his soul; but they are suffocated and choaked up by his immoderate love of play: --- Strange is it, that a man, capable of thinking so justly, will not be at the pains of thinking at all, but suffer himself to be swayed, by a darling propensity to actions, which, if he once reflected upon, he would be so far from perpetrating, that he would despise the very temptation of being guilty of.



C H A P. III.

Presents the reader with some passages which cannot fail of entertaining those not interested in them, and may be of service to those who are.

AMONG the numerous troops of British toasts, there are few who shine with more distinguished lustre in all public places, than the beautiful Marcella. Besides an exact symmetry of features, a most delicate complexion and a fine-turned shape, there is something peculiarly enchanting in her air and mien : I never see her without being reminded of the celebrated description Milton gives of Eve in her state of innocence :

Grace is in all her steps, heav'n in her eye,
In ev'ry gesture dignity and love.

She was married very young to Ce'adon,--- and though neither of their hearts had been consulted in the match, yet they had the reputation of living well together ; — they behaved to each other with the greatest complaisance in public, and if any cause of discontent ever happened between them, both had the discretion to keep it extremely private.

I could not, therefore, expect to make any extraordinary discoveries in this family ; ---the door, however, happening to be open one day as I pass'd by, I stepp'd in without any previous design, and, now I did so, was rather excited by curiosity of seeing some fine pictures, which I had been told were in the house, than of prying into the behaviour of the owners.

But

• But it frequently falls out, that what we least seek we most easily find, and those things we imagine farthest from us are in effect the nearest : --- in passing through the several rooms in this house I saw Marcella writing in her closet, and never was I so much amazed as now to find so fair a form harbour a mind capable of dictating these lines. :

To FILLAMOUR.

“ Dearest of your sex,

“ THANKS to the powers of love and liberty,
 “ that hated bar to all my happiness is removed
 “ for a short time. Celadon is gone upon a party
 “ of pleasure, and this night is entirely my own ;
 “ — if therefore no more agreeable engage-
 “ ments detain you, come here between the hours
 “ of twelve and one ; — I shall take care to
 “ send all the family to bed, except the faithful
 “ Rachel, who shall attend to admit you, on your
 “ giving a gentle rap against the shutter of the par-
 “ lour window next the door : let me know by
 “ the bearer, whether I may expect you, --- tho’
 “ it is a blessing I scarce doubt of, if any of that
 “ affection be sincere, as you have often vow’d to

“ The believing and passionate

“ MARCELLA.”

Having sealed this billet, she call’d her chamber-maid, and order’d her to send it, as directed, by a trusty porter ; --- then threw herself upon a couch, --- took the novel of Silvia and Philander, --- read a little in it, --- sigh’d, and seem’d all dissolv’d in the most tender languishment, when her emissary return’d, and brought this answer to her summons :

To

To the Charming MARCELLA.

‘ Dear angel,

‘ I AM at present surrounded with a great deal
‘ of company, and have no opportunity to thank
‘ as I would the kindness of yours :--- I can only
‘ say, that nothing shall keep me from flying to
‘ my adorable Marcella, at the appointed hour ; ---
‘ ’till then --- adieu ; --- be assured that I am al-
‘ ways, with the utmost ardency,

‘ Your devoted Vassal,

‘ FILLAMOUR.’

The fair libertine now express'd the highest satisfaction, and immediately fell into discourse with her confidante, Rachel, concerning the manner in which this nocturnal guest should be concealed, and how neither his entrance nor his exit be discovered, or even suspected by any of the family.

I had no curiosity to know any thing farther of this affair, so took the first opportunity of leaving the house, extremely troubled in my mind that a woman, whose beauty had so much attracted my respect, should prove herself so unworthy of it by her conduct.

‘ With what boldness, said I within myself, does
‘ the lovely wanton run headlong to her ruin, fear-
‘ less of guilt, and of the punishment which, one
‘ time or other, must be the unfailing consequence ;

‘ As if that faultless form could act no crime,
‘ But Heaven on looking on it must forgive !’

I went home, and got my Tablets clear'd from the impure contents of the above-recited epistles ; --- I wish'd, indeed, to think no more of this trans-
action ;

action ; and, to second my endeavours that way, towards evening sallied out again, equipped in my Invisible Belt, like a true knight-errant, in search of such adventures as chance should present me with.

I went to the house of an elderly lady, with whom I formerly had been acquainted ; she was at that time looked upon as a pattern of piety and prudence : — fathers, — husbands, — brothers, — all who had any concern for the virtue and reputation of the female part of their family, recommended her example for their imitation ; but, at last, after a long series of the most laudable and becoming actions, she at once degenerated into the very reverse of what she had been ; — fell into all the fashionable follies of the times, at an age when others are beginning to grow weary of them, and commenced a coquette at fifty-five.

I had been told such things in relation to her conduct, as seemed to me too unaccountable to be believed ; and was extremely sorry to find, in the visit I now made her, all those reports confirmed by the testimony of my own senses.

This lady, whom I shall distinguish by the name of Lamia, sets an high value upon herself for her great skill at picquet ; — she challenged Grizelda, another antiquated belle, who also pretends to be an adept in that science, to play with her for an hundred guineas the first four games in six ; — the other loved money, and, not doubting she should come off conqueror, readily embraced the proposal ; and the night agreed upon between them for the decision of this event, happen'd to be that in which I went.

Grizelda came to the door just as I did, so I slipped in behind, and followed her up stairs, where she was received by Lamia with the greatest politeness and shew of affection: — the card-table was called for, and the ladies sat opposite to each other; I placed myself at the end of the table, that being between them I might have the better opportunity of observing what both did: — they were now very serious and attentive to the business they were upon; — play'd, or rather cheated each other with great caution; for I soon perceived that it was in this latter part of the art of gaming that the excellence of either chiefly consisted.

For a time each was so taken up with her own pettinesses as not to have leisure to observe those practised by her adversary; — at last, however, Lamia having retaken in a card she had laid out, Grizelda perceived it, and accused her of the change: — rage and disdain, on finding herself detected, made the cheeks of the other glow with a deeper scarlet than the carmine had given them; and her eyes, even in despite of age, sparkled with fires which love and youth had never power to fill them with: — the other was no less enflamed; — but their resentment will best be shewn in the expressions made use of by themselves.

Lamia. ‘ I am surprised you can suspect me
‘ guilty of so mean a thing as cheating at cards; —
‘ sure you cannot think I value the trifle we are
‘ playing for. — What is an hundred guineas to
‘ me? — I regard an hundred no more than a
‘ pinch of snuff.

Grizelda. ‘ Madam, I value an hundred guineas
‘ as little as yourself; — but I hate to be im-
‘ posed upon.

Lamia.

Lamia. ‘ What do you mean, madam? — Do you say I have imposed upon you ?

Grizelda. ‘ I say you would have done it, madam, if my eyes had not been quicker than your hands.

Lamia. ‘ Madam, I scorn your words ; and if you were not in my own house should tell you that you lyed.

Grizelda. ‘ And if it were not in respect to your age, madam, I should tell you that you were a base woman, and had invited me hither only to cheat me of my money.

Lamia. ‘ My age ! — good luck, — my age ! — I leave the world to judge which of us two looks the oldest. — I beg, madam, you will not deceive yourself : — it is not your long false locks, hanging dangling on each side your face, that hide the wrinkles of it.

Grizelda. ‘ I wear no plumpers, madam : Do you not remember, when one of yours dropt out of your mouth at Lady Betty’s drawing-room, how all the company were frighted at you, and cry’d out you had lost half your face ?’

I started on hearing this reproach of Grizelda, being at that time utterly unacquainted with the meaning of it ; but as it is highly probable that a great many of my readers may be as ignorant in this point as myself then was, I shall explain it by giving a direction of the use and preparation of plumpers, as I have since received it from the waiting-maid of a woman of distinction.

A sure way to help LANK CHEEKS.

‘ TAKE a piece of the finest, cleanest sponge you can get ; — cut out of it two small bolsters, and place them between your cheeks and teeth, if you have any ; if not, the gums will serve to

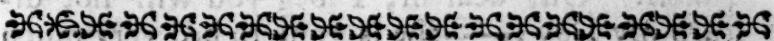
‘ keep them up ; — on taking them out of your mouth going to bed, throw them into a tea-cup of rose or orange flower water, and let them soke all night ;—this will not only cleanse them from whatever impurities they may have happened to have received, but will also give a delectable flavour to the breath.—*Probatum est.*’

These ladies pursued their mutual altercations for a considerable time, in a fashion which the intelligent reader may easily conceive by the sample I have given ;—I shall therefore only say, that after having charged each other with all the vices and foibles that either of them could think of, they at last quarrelled themselves into a reconciliation, — begg'd each other's pardon, and went to play a second time ;—then fell out again, and provocations on both sides being renewed, and reproaches still growing more piquant, Lamia tore the cards and threw them into the fire ;—Grizelda call'd for her chair, and left the house in a great fury ;—I gladly followed her out, being heartily sick of what I had seen between these fair, or rather unfair antagonists ; but had no opportunity of getting away before, as the door had never once been opened.

It was now near two hours past midnight, and I found more satisfaction in the thoughts of going to my repose than in those discoveries my Invisibility had entertained me with.—I was making all the speed I could to my apartments for that purpose, —but fate decreed it otherwise, and had contrived an accident which renew'd all my former curiosity : —In my way home, I pass'd thro' the street where Macella lived ; and the sight of her house bringing fresh into my mind what the morning had presented, I could not keep myself from stopping short to make some reflections on the conduct of that fair fallen

fallen angel. — ‘ She is doubtless by this time in
 ‘ the arms of her beloved Fillamour, said I to myself,
 ‘ and while revelling in the pleasures of a loose
 ‘ inclination, forfeits all sense of honour, duty,
 ‘ fame, and even what is owing to the merit of
 ‘ those charms nature has endowed her with ; —
 ‘ and oh, — strange paradox of a vicious flame !
 ‘ —renders herself cheap and contemptible in the
 ‘ eyes of the very man whose esteem she most wishes
 ‘ to preserve.’

How long I should have remained in this reverie I know not, but I was rous'd from it by the sudden appearance of Celadon, who with a light carry'd before him came hastily down the street and knocked at his own door : — to see him return at a time when I knew he was so little expected, made me not doubt but that he had received some information of the injury done him, and came in order to detect and revenge himself on the guilty pair : — I trembled for poor Marcella ; but what grounds I had to do so, as well as the event of this night's transaction, must be left to the next chapter.



C H A P. IV.

Concludes an adventure of a very singular nature in its consequences.

THE anxiety I was under to know what would become of poor Marcella immediately determined me to follow her husband into the house. — A man servant not having obeyed his lady's commands in going to bed, having something or other wherewith to employ himself in his own room, on hearing somebody at the door, looked through the window, and perceiving it was his

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master, flew down stairs, and gave him entrance on the first knock.

Rachel, who had been posted centry in a back-parlour, in order to watch the break of day, and conduct Fillamour out of the house before any of the family were stirring, now came running out on hearing the street-door opened ; but scarce could an apparition have spread a greater terror through her whole frame, than did the sight of Celadon at this juncture.

Rachel. ‘Lord, sir, who could have thought your honour would have come home to night ?’

Celadon. ‘I did not design it indeed ; — but is it so strange a thing that a man should change his mind ?’

In speaking this he was passing on, but she threw herself between him and the foot of the stairs, and catching fast hold of the sleeve of his coat, prevented him from going up, with these words :

Rachel. ‘Oh, dear sir, I beg you will not disturb my lady ; — she is gone to bed very much discomposed ; — pray be so good as to step into the parlour, — there is a good fire, — and I will go and see if she is awake, and tell her you are here.’

Celadon. ‘My wife ill ! — What is the matter with her ?’

Rachel. ‘I do not know, sir, but she was seized with a sort of a — I can’t tell the name of it, — indeed not I ; --- but I believe it was some-thing like a fit, --- and so, sir, she went to bed ; but I will go and let her know you are come.’

Celadon. ‘No, no, — she may be asleep, and it would be a pity to awake her ; therefore I’ll take

‘ take your advice, Mrs. Rachel, and sit a little in
 ‘ the parlour. --- Tom, do you go to bed ; I shall
 ‘ not want any thing to-night.’

The fellow did as he was commanded ; and I could easily perceive, by Rachel’s countenance, that she was upon the wing to be gone too ; impatient, I suppose, to apprise Marcella of what had happened, and assist her in contriving some means for concealing her gallant ; --- but whatever her thoughts were, Celadon had that moment got something in his head which effectually prevented any schemes she might otherwise have laid for securing the honour of her lady ; --- Tom was no sooner gone, than Celadon took hold of both her hands and drew her gently into the parlour, with these words :

Celadon. ‘ Come, Mrs. Rachel, if I am so com-
 ‘ plaisant to my wife’s disorder as to refrain going
 ‘ to bed to her, I think I may very well be al-
 ‘ lowed the pleasure of your company, by way of
 ‘ consolation.

Rachel. ‘ Oh, dear sir, what pleasure can you
 ‘ find in the company of such a one as I ?

Celadon. ‘ As much as I can wish ; — come, sit
 ‘ down,—nay, you shall sit by me ; — now we
 ‘ are alone there is no occasion for all this distance
 ‘ between us,---I have a great deal to say to you ;
 ‘ ---nothing sure was ever so lucky as my coming
 ‘ home to night ; --- I like you, --- I love you, ---
 ‘ and have long’d, almost ever since you came into
 ‘ the family, for an opportunity to tell you so.

Rachel. ‘ Lord, sir, how strangely you talk to
 ‘ one ! --- I wish your honour would let me go up
 ‘ stairs to see how my lady does.

Celadon. ‘ No, indeed, I shall not suffer you to
 ‘ run away and leave me alone here ; if my wife
 ‘ wants any thing she will ring her bell. --- Come,

' none of this coyness ; — let me tell you, child,
 ' too much reserve in private with a man who
 ' loves you, and has it in his power to make your
 ' fortune, is as unbecoming as too much famili-
 ' arity would be in public ; — you may depend upon
 ' it, whatever favours you bestow on me shall be
 ' returned with others no less agreeable to yourself.
 ' — I know very well how a person of my station
 ' ought to behave towards one of yours in these
 ' cales, and shall act accordingly.'

Rachel made no reply to all this ; but hung down her head, and looked extremely silly.—Celadon, interpreting her silence as a half consent to his desires, began now to add kisses and embraces to his solicitations ; — the warmth with which he pressed her soon wrought the effect it was intended for, tho' I easily perceived the most prevailing argument he made use of was taking out his purse, and pouring twenty guineas into her lap.—The transport which sparkled in the eyes of this mercenary creature, on beholding the glittering bait, put me immediately in mind of what Mr. Dryden makes Jupiter say in his play of *Amphytrion* :

When I made
 This gold, I made a greater god than Jove,
 And gave my own omnipotence away.

But it is little to be wonder'd at, that a girl, such as this Rachel, should fall prostrate before that reigning idol of the world, who has for its votaries not only men of the greatest parts and abilities, but also too many among those who make the highest professions of honour, probity, and virtue ; — nay, I am sorry to say, of religion : — daily experience, however, and a very small observation of the corruption of the present age, evinces this melancholy truth.

So

So finding a scene was likely to ensue, which it was not agreeable to my inclination, or any way proper that I should be witness of, I withdrew into an adjacent parlour, where solitude, darkness, and the profound silence of every thing about me, contributed to promote the most solemn meditations.— I reflected on the extreme folly, as well as wickedness, of giving way to an inordinate gratification of the senses, and the certain danger, and almost certain infamy, which attends the doing so; --- on this occasion several passages and accidents relating to many of my acquaintance occur'd fresh to my mind: and when I remember how some, who had been endowed by heaven and fortune with every requisite, excepting virtue, to complete their happiness, yet by the want of that alone had exposed themselves to a condition the most abject and contemptible to which a reasonable being can possibly be reduced, I could not forbear crying out with the inimitable Cowley,

All this world's noise appears to me,
But as a dull ill-acted comedy..

While I was thus ruminating, and wondering within myself what would be the consequence of this night's transaction, I perceived through the crevices of the window-shutters, that the day began to break, and presently after heard a certain rustling upon the stairs; --- it was occasioned by Marcella and Fillamour, who, on finding Rachel did not come up as they expected, and the light was pretty far advancing, were creeping softly down; --- the noise Marcella made in unfastening the chain that went across the street door, wak'd Celadon and Rachel, who it seems had both fallen asleep: the former, on hearing the noise, was running out of the parlour to see what was the matter; but Rachel pre-

vented him, by saying she was sure it was only one of the footmen, who went out more early than ordinary to the stable : --- this excuse might have solved all, if Marcella herself had not unluckily been her own betrayer. --- That lady, incensed beyond measure, pushed open the door of the room where Rachel was ordered to attend, beginning to upbraid before she saw her.

Marcella. ‘ So, minx, --- you have served me finely ; --- it is almost broad day. --- I have knocked the heel of my shoe almost off, for I would not ring for fear of alarming the family ; --- I suppose you have been asleep : --- this it is to place any dependance on servants.

Celadon, on hearing his wife’s voice before she entered, had stepp’d behind a screen, either suspecting something of the truth, or because he was unwilling to be surprized with Rachel at that hour ; and Rachel, doubly confounded between her lady’s reproaches, and the knowledge who was witness of them, was utterly unable to speak one word for some time, but shook her head, ---wink’d, and pointed to the screen, thinking, by those significant gestures, to prevent Marcella from saying any thing farther ; ’till finding shew as again opening her mouth, she recovered herself enough to cry out :

Rachel. ‘ Lord, madam,--- do not stand talking here, you will certainly get cold, and make yourself worse ; --- consider you are half naked ; --- pray go to bed again.

Marcella. ‘ What does the wench mean ? But I suppose you have been at the ratafia bottle, and stupified yourself, according to custom. Well, ’tis your own loss ; for I dare swear Fillamour would

‘ would have given you no less a present than five guineas for your diligence, if you had come up as you ought to have done ; --- 'tis now quite light in the street, and a thousand to one but some of the neighbours may have seen him go out.’

Celadon coming forward. ‘ So, madam, I find you have been diverting yourself, and Fillamour is the man to whom I am obliged for giving you consolation in my absence.’

That person must know very little of nature, who does not easily conceive what Marcella felt at so shocking a juncture ; --- surprise, shame, and vexation for having thus foolishly exposed her guilt, quite overwhelmed her heart ; — she gave a great shriek, and sunk, half-fainting, into a chair. --- Rachel ran to her assistance, and at the same time willing to retrieve, if possible, told Celadon that he must not take any notice of her lady’s words ; --- that she went very ill to bed ; --- that she was delirious, and knew not what she said. This, however, had no effect upon him ; --- he was too well convinced of the injury which had been done him, and loaded his transgressing wife with every invective that a husband, in his circumstances, could invent.

But certainly it is impossible for any woman to behave with greater courage and resolution than Marcella now did ; --- she presently regained her spirits ; and after having made Rachel leave the room, a moment’s reflection served her to reply to the reproaches made her by her husband in these terms :

Marcella. ‘ Well, sir, I confess appearances are against me ; nor do I wonder at, nor will resent, the asperity of your treatment ; --- tho’ guilty of

‘ no real crime, my vanity has led me into a folly which merits all you have said to me. --- I have not, in fact, dishonoured either myself or you ; and my behaviour, this night, has only mortified the pride and arrogance of a man who would have rival'd you in my esteem and affection.’

Celadon. ‘ Excellent, i'faith, --- beyond imagination : --- I have been told, indeed, that a woman need but look down upon her apron-string to find an excuse for the most enormous crime she can be guilty of ; but this of yours is such a one as cannot fail of giving a good deal of diversion in a court of judicature ; tho' I scarce think it will save either Fillamour's estate from the penalty the law inflicts on an attempt to bastardize an honourable family, or his throat from the justice of my sword.’

The boldness of Marcella was not to be aw'd by these menaces : --- she found he had too much understanding to be imposed upon by the shallow artifice she had made use of ; that he now heartily despised her, and that she had no longer any measures to preserve with him ; --- therefore, collecting all the courage she was mistress of, she threw her eyes upon him with a contempt equal to that with which he looked upon her, and made him this reply :

Marcella. ‘ ’Tis mighty well, sir, --- you are at your liberty to make use of all the weapons in your power for revenge ; but I would have you remember, that whether Fillamour cuts your throat, or you cut his, and are hang'd for it, the matter will be of little importance to me : --- and as for a court of judicature, I believe you will find it very difficult to make good any accusations you may exhibit against me there : ---

‘ no

‘ no one ever saw me in bed with Fillamour, much less can prove any criminal conversation between us, so that the ridicule would turn wholly upon yourself ; and perhaps provoke me, as I have had no child by you, to bring in a bill of impotency ; in which case I should have all my fortune returned ; — a thing your present circumstances would not very well bear, as some part of your estate is already mortgaged.’

To all this Celadon was able to make no other reply, than that he stood amazed at her audacity ; --- that he found she was abandoned to all sense of shame ; that she was a monster of impudence, and such like ; at which she seemed not in the least moved, but proceeded to reason with him in the same determined fashion she had begun.

Marcella. ‘ Look you, Celadon, all the fury you can be possessed of will remedy nothing : --- let us argue like rational creatures : --- whatever opinion we may have of each other, the only way to preserve either of our characters is to live well together in the eyes of the world ; --- I tell you that I am innocent, and it is for your ease and interest, as well as mine, that you should believe I am so ; which if you do, I faithfully promise to regulate my conduct in such a manner as to bring no disreputation on myself, or dishonour to you ; — but if you fly into extremes, you will oblige me to do the same ; and what but our mutual infamy and destruction can be the end of such a contest ? I leave you to consider on what I have said, and wait your cooler moments for an answer.’

With these words she went hastily out of the room ; --- Celadon offered not to detain her, but continued

continued walking backwards and forwards, testifying, by several disordered gestures, the inward agitations of his mind.—After some moments passed in the silent expressions of his rage, he called to the servants, most of whom were now stirring, to get a bed prepared for him in another chamber; but I am of opinion, that when he retired thither, it was less to sleep than to reflect how it would best become him to behave under the shocking circumstance he was now involved in.

Finding no farther discoveries were likely to be made at this time, I left the house on the first opening of the street-door, and returned home; where, fatigued as I was for want of rest, the astonishment I was in at the behaviour of Marcella would not suffer the least slumber to close my eyes.

For some days I was extremely impatient to know the result of this affair; but hearing no talk of it about town, began to conclude that the wife's arguments had prevailed, and the husband had submitted his resentment to his convenience: I soon found I was not deceived in my conjectures; for in less than a week I saw Celadon and Marcella taking the air together in their own coach, with the same appearance of serenity in both their countenances, as if nothing of the adventure I have been relating had ever happened.

C H A P.

C H A P. V.

Shews, that though a remissness of care in the bringing up of children can scarce fail of being attended with very bad consequences; yet, that an over-exact circumspection in minute things may sometimes prove equally pernicious to their future welfare.

VARIOUS were the reports concerning Alinda, both while she was alive and after her decease; but all the world could say with any certainty, either of her affairs or conduct, might be comprised in the following articles:

That she was the only child of a very eminent and wealthy merchant in the city, who, on the death of his wife, left off business; and having purchased an estate of near a thousand pounds a year in the country, retired thither to pass the remainder of his days, taking Alinda with him, at that time about ten years of age.

That through some peculiarities in his temper, she was educated in a very odd fashion, — secluded from all conversation with the neighbouring gentry, and scarce suffered to speak to any one out of their own family.

That after his death, which happened in her seventeenth year, she returned, with the consent of her guardians, to London, — lived in a manner suitable to her fortune, and had many advantageous offers of marriage; all which she rejected without giving any reason for doing so.

That

That at one-and-twenty she fell into a wasting disorder, which was judged to proceed rather from some inward grief preying upon her spirits, than from any distemper of the body : — It baffled, however, all the skill of the physicians, and she expired after a tedious languishment of near three years, leaving the possession of her estate to a nephew of her father's, who was the next of kin.

All these things, I say, were public, — but as to the motive which made her avoid listening to any proposals for changing her condition, or the cause of that melancholy which brought on her death, every one spoke of them as they thought proper, and according as the dispositions of their own hearts inclined them to judge.

Few, however, were charitable enough to put the best construction on her conduct ; — some said she was a man-hater : — others, that loving the sex too well, she could not think of entering into a state which must confine her to one alone : — those who entertained the most favourable opinion imagined she had unhappily engaged her heart where there was no possibility of a return : — this last conjecture seemed indeed most probable, and gained ground after she fell into that heavy languor which excluded her from all those pleasures she had been accustomed to partake, and at length deprived her of life ; — but all this, to make use of the vulgar adage, was speaking without book ; — my gift of Invisibility gave me alone the means of penetrating into the mystery.

As I had been acquainted with her, and visited her while she continued to see company, I frequently sent, or called to enquire after her health : — one day when I did so, a servant belonging to her kins-

man

man and heir at law, came to the door at the same time, and we both received for answer, that she expired the night before.

The fellow ran directly to inform his master, to whom these tidings would probably be not unwelcome ; and I went home, clapp'd on my Belt of Invisibility, and returned in a short time to the house of Alinda :---the reader will perhaps wonder for what reason, and it is not fit I should keep him in ignorance.

There was a clergyman lived in the house with her, and performed the office of a chaplain :--- he was a person of whom her father having conceived a high opinion, had taken into his family, and set over her in the manner of a preceptor, and he had ever since continued with her : I had several times dined with him at her table, and perceived he professed an extraordinary sanctity, and the extremest regard for the welfare of his fair patroness ;--- and this it was that made me desirous of seeing in what manner he would behave upon her death.

I expected to have found him either in his own chamber bewailing the early fate of so beneficent a friend, or sitting by her corpse religiously moralizing on the shadowy happiness of this transitory world ; but after seeking him in vain, in these and several other rooms, at last I discovered him in a closet, where I knew she reposit'd her things of greatest value : --- he was busily employed in rummaging her bureau, from the little cell of which I saw him convey, as near as I could guess, between two and three hundred pieces of gold, and several bank bills to a much greater amount : --- he then pulled out a drawer, which contain'd her jewels :--- he first took up one,---then another,---surveyed them

them with a greedy eye, but laid them down again, and shut the drawer ; but after a moment's pause, opened it a second time, and took out a ring set round with large brilliants. --- ' I may keep this, ' cry'd he ; it will scarce be miss'd ; — or if it ' be, I can pretend she made me a present of it ' in her life-time, and nobody will suspect the ' contrary.' — Here he gave over his search, lock'd the bureau, put the key into his pocket, and went into his own room.

It would be hard for me to determine, whether astonishment or indignation was most predominant in me at this sight : --- I wished never to have beheld it, or that I had been at liberty to pluck the sacred robe from off the back of that vile prophaner of his order : — I was going away with a mind more troubled than I can well express, when one of Alinda's maids came running into the room with a seal'd packet in her hand, and deliver'd it to this disciple of Judas Iscariot, telling him at the same time, that it had been found under her mistress's pillow just after her death ; but that she had forgot in the hurry to bring it to him before.

He reply'd, with an affected indifference, that it was very well ; --- that he would look over the papers, and take care that whatever injunctions they contain'd should be fulfilled ; — and with these words dismiss'd her.

The superscription on the cover of this packet was to a lady with whom Alinda had been extremely intimate, but had not seen for a considerable time, she being excluded, as well as the rest of her acquaintance, after she fell into that deep melancholy which ended her days : --- the priest immediately broke the seal, and found a little letter to the

The above-mention'd lady, --- the contents whereof were as follow :

• DEAR MADAM,

• THAT I have not seen you so long has not
• been owing to want of friendship, but to a reso-
• lution of depriving myself of every thing that was
• agreeable to me in life ; and that I do not now,
• in these last moments of my life, ask to see you,
• is only because I would not tax your pity with
• the sight of so sad an object : --- I am blasted, my
• dear friend, wither'd in my bloom, and scarce
• the shadow of what I was : the enclosed me-
• moirs will inform you of the cruel cause, which
• I intreat you will publish to the world after my
• decease : --- the shocking tale may perhaps be a
• serviceable warning to some parents, as well as
• children : --- I have given my cousin *****
• orders concerning some things I would have done,
• among the number of which is, that he will
• present you with my hoop diamond ring : --- I
• beg you will accept and wear it in remembrance
• of

• Your dying friend,

• ALINDA.

He started, --- bent his brows, turn'd pale and red by turns, and seem'd in great confusion while looking over this little epistle ; but all his emotions were very much increased on examining the papers that accompanied it : --- still as he read he tore the leaves asunder, and threw them on the fire, which happening not to burn very fiercely, I was quick enough to snatch from the intended devastation, and convey into my pocket, while he was taken up with the remaining pages, and thought himself secure by the tale of his misdeeds being extinct in all-devouring flames.

He

He had but just finish'd, when a servant came running into the room, and told him that Mr. ***** was below, and having been informed that Alinda's keys had been deliver'd to him, demanded to speak with him immediately :---on this the artful hypocrite composed his countenance, drew every feature into the attitude of solemn sadness, and holding a white handkerchief to his eyes, went down to act the part he thought would best become him before the kinsman of Alinda.

I follow'd close at his heels into the parlour, where Mr. ***** and two other persons waited for him :--- he began, with well-dissembled grief, to expatiate on the loss the world had in so excellent a lady as Alinda ; and failed not, in his harangue, artfully to intermix some praises on himself, for the good principles his precepts had in-grafted on her mind.

Mr. ***** seemed to take little notice of all he said on this occasion, and prevented him from going so far as perhaps he otherwise would have done, by telling him, in a very grave and reserv'd tone, that he was in great haste at present :---that he came thither only to give the necessary orders concerning his cousin's funeral ; and that till the melancholy ceremony was over, he should put a friend in possession of the house, and whatever effects it contain'd ; therefore expected the keys of every thing should be immediately deliver'd.

To this the parson reply'd, --- that he had got them into his hands with no other view than to secure them for him, who had the undoubted right to all which his dear benefactress had been mistress of :--- ' For indeed, continued he, I apprehended ' some foul play might have been attempted, as ' at

‘ at the hour of her decease she had none but servants about her, some of whom had been too lately taken into the family to have given any great proofs of their integrity.’

After this they went thro’ every room, examining what was to be found ; all which scrutiny, as yet, afforded the heir no reason for complaint : --- on opening the above-mentioned bureau, and looking over Alinda’s jewels, he miss’d not the ring he had been defrauded of ; but when the other private drawers presented him so little of what he expected, he could not forbear discovering some suspicion, as it must be owned he had sufficient cause ; for the person who had been before-hand with him in the search, had left no more than eight guineas and one six-and-thirty piece in specie, with three or four bills of an inconsiderable value.

‘ I am surprised, said Mr. *****, that a woman of my cousin’s fortune should leave herself so bare of cash ; and cannot imagine by what means she dissipated so large a yearly income.’ --- ‘ Alas, Sir, (reply’d the pretended zealot, with his hands and eyes lifted up to heaven) it ought not to appear strange to you, that a lady of your excellent kinswoman’s charitable and benevolent disposition should refuse nothing in her power, when the cries of distress and the moans of affliction called for her assistance. --- If you would know in what manner she disposed of her money, enquire of hospitals, the prisons, and the necessitous petitioners that every day received their sustenance from her bounty, and you will find an easy account of her expences in her large and numerous donations.’

Mr.

Mr. ***** only answer'd sullenly, — that he should be better able to judge how he ought to think of the affair after he had spoke to her steward; on which the other clapping his hand upon his breast, was beginning to make many asseverations, that till that moment he never knew what sum or sums the lady had by her when she died, or had ever look'd, or even entertain'd a thought of looking into any place where it might be supposed she kept her money.—I staid not, however, to hear what effect his hypocrisy produced, but went home, being impatient to see the contents of Alinda's manuscript.



C H A P. VI.

Will fully satisfy the curiosity the former may have excited.

THE haste I made in snatching the following papers from the flames, happily preserved them so entirely from the destruction to which they had been destin'd, that though the edges were in many places much scorch'd, yet not a single word throughout the whole was any way damaged; and the reader may depend on having the story as perfect as if he saw it in the heroine's own hand.

Memoirs of the unfortunate ALINDA, wrote by herself, and faithfully transcrib'd from the original copy.

I Am sensible that many people have been very busy with my fame while living, nor do I expect to be treated with less severity after I am dead; — I can-

— I cannot, however, think of an eternal separation from this world, without leaving something behind me which may serve to clear up those passages in my conduct, which, by their being mysterious, have given room for censure ; and I do not this with any view of softening the asperity of the ill-natur'd for the errors I have been guilty of, or of exciting compassion in the more generous and gentle for my misfortunes ; but merely to the end that, if I am condemned, I may be condemned for real, not imaginary faults.

Sorry I am to accuse a father who tenderly loved me ; yet certain it is, that his over-anxiety for my welfare has been the primary source of every woe my heart has laboured under ; and that by his mistaken endeavours to make me great and happy, I have been rendered the most miserable of created beings.

The fortune I was born to be posses'd of, and some natural endowments his affection fancy'd in me, made him flatter himself with the hopes of seeing me one day blaze forth in all the pomp of quality ; nor could he endure the thoughts of marrying me to any man beneath the rank of right honourable ; and for fear any partial inclination of my own should disappoint these high-raised expectations, he kept me from the conversation of every one whom he thought capable of attracting a heart unbiass'd by interest, and unambitious of grandeur.

Soon after my mother's death he quitted business, and retired to an estate he had some time before purchased in the country : — when we removed, I was too young to have any taste for the pleasures of the town, and regretted only the want of those play-fellows I had left behind : — indeed I wonder that

that I was not quite moped : I was suffered to go to no school, tho' there was a great one very near us ; — never stirred beyond the precincts of our garden walls ; — went not to church, because there it would have been impossible for me not to see and be seen ; --- no company visited us ; for my father deprived himself of the pleasure of conversing with any of the neighbouring gentry, for fear that, as I grew up, I might take a liking to some one or other of their sons, none of whom he thought a match good enough for me, as they were not dignified with titles. --- I had learned writing and dancing, but was far from being perfect in either ; and my father being unwilling I should be without these accomplishments, took the pains himself to set me copies to improve me in the one, and at length provided a master, too old and too ugly to give him any apprehensions, to instruct me in the other : --- besides these two avocations, I had no amusement except reading, which as I much delighted in, my father constantly supplied me with such books as he thought proper for my sex and age.

Excepting some treatises of divinity, the subjects of my entertainment afforded little improvement to my understanding, they consisting only in romances, and some very few old plays ; so that the ideas they inspired me with were as antiquated as the habits worn in the days of Queen Elizabeth, and I was utterly ignorant of the modes, manners, and customs of the age I lived in.

In this stupid and dispiriting situation did I pass full nineteen months ; about the expiration of which time my father happened into company with a person who wears the sacred appearance of an ecclesiastic ; but is in reality one of those mentioned in holy

holy writ by the name of wolves in sheeps cloathing ; — his outward behaviour seems directed by the ministers of grace and goodness, while in his treacherous heart a thousand fiends lie in wait to bring ruin and destruction on the credulous listener to his wiles : — but before I proceed in my unhappy story, it is fit I should give a more particular character of the wretch who has so great a share in it.

First for his extraction : — His father was a Frenchman, servant to a person of distinction in Normandy ; but having more ambition than honesty, found means to rob his master of a considerable sum, and came over to England, where he set up for a gentleman and a most zealous protestant, told a long plausible story of the great hardships he had sustain'd on the score of religion, and found here the same pity and encouragement as many others had done who fly here for an asylum on the same pretences.

Soon after his arrival he married a Dutchwoman, by whom he had a son who inherits all his father's virtues, and is the person whose story is so unhappily interwoven with my own.

Young Le Bris, for that is the name of this worthy family, discover'd in his youth some indications of a good capacity for learning, insomuch that a certain lord, taking a great fancy to him, sent him to Westminster-school, and afterwards to the University, in order to qualify him for the pulpit, assuring him that he should not be without a benefice as soon as he should be fit to receive it.

But he had scarce completed his studies for that purpose, when all his present support and future

expectations vanish'd on the sudden death of his noble patron, which was follow'd in a few months after by that of his father ; so that he was left entirely destitute, his mother not being able to afford him the least assistance.

After many long and fruitless sollicitations for a living, he was glad to accept of a small curacy in one of the remotest counties in England, where he resided several years ; but was at last turned out on account of neglect of duty, and other misbehaviour : — he then came back to London, — gave out printed bills for teaching French and Latin at very low rates ; but finding little encouragement that way, turn'd Fleet-parson, and earn'd a precarious sustenance by clandestine marriages.

It was in these wretched circumstances that my father met with him, being in town on some business ; and being told by some one, who it is likely knew no more of him than what he was pleased to say of himself, that he was a very worthy, tho' distress'd clergyman, made him the offer of a handsome salary to come into his family by way of Chaplain ; and withal, to instruct me in the French language, and whatever else was fit for me to learn, or he was capable of teaching ; — he readily embraced the proposal, and on my father's return came down with him.

My father presented him to me as a kind of tutor, or preceptor ; — told me I must submit myself to his directions, — be attentive to all he said to me, and in every thing treat him with the greatest respect and reverence : — ‘ For, added he, it is by the lessons he is capable of giving you, that you alone can make any shining figure in the station wherein I hope to see you placed.’

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THE INVISIBLE SPY.

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It will, perhaps, afford some matter of surprise, that my father, who had hitherto preserved such an extreme caution in preventing my having the least conversation with any man, should now so strenuously recommend this person to me; but it must be considered, that he was no less than six or seven and forty years of age; — that tho' not deform'd, was far from handsome; and, besides, had a certain austerity in his manners which could not be very agreeable to youth.

It was, indeed, some time before I could be contented with the dominion given him over me; but my obedience to my father obliging me to behave towards him with esteem, custom at last converted that complaisance, which at first was no more than feign'd, into sincere: — a kind of affection, by degrees, mingled itself with the reverence I was bid to pay him; — I was never so happy as in the hours set apart for receiving his instructions; and the thoughts of the benefits that might be supposed to accrue from them, afforded less pleasure than the praises I was always certain he would bestow on my docility.—In fine, I not only loved the teacher for the precept's sake; but, as the poet says,

I lov'd the precepts for the teacher's sake.

Nor is it to be wonder'd at, that I tasted more satisfaction in his society than I had ever known before; — I wanted not ideas, tho' hitherto I had nothing to improve them: — I had been allow'd to converse with none but the servants, who could only divert me with idle tales of thieves, apparitions, and haunted houses; — my tutor, after having finished his graver lessons, would frequently entertain me with some extraordinary incident or other,

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either

either taken from history or romance ; but, whether real or fictitious, I had sense enough to know were such as enlarged my understanding as well as charm'd my ear.

It is certain, indeed, that he spared no pains to insinuate himself into my good graces ; and no less certain also, that the ungrateful design he had in doing so, succeeded to the utter destruction of the whole happiness of my future life, and, at last, of my life itself ; as will appear by these memoirs, which while I am writing I know not whether I shall have strength to finish.

I shall therefore reduce my unhappy story into as short a compass as I can.—In spite of the little amiableness this tutor had in his person ;—in spite of the vast disparity of years between us, I conceived the most tender affection for him ;—alas, I was then too young, — too innocent, to know what was meant by the word Love, any farther than that love which we naturally bear to a father, brother, or some other near relation,—and thought not what I felt for him was any more, or would be attended with any other consequences ; and, as I apprehended no shame or danger in the kindness I had for him, endeavour'd not to put a stop to the growth of it, nor even to conceal it.

But Le Bris saw much better into my heart than I did myself ; and dreading lest my father should be alarm'd at the too open fondness of my behaviour to him, began to treat me with less familiarity, and exerted the master much more than he had done : —this change both surprised and grieved me ; — I bore it, however, for two whole days, without seeming to take any notice of it ; but on the third, being alone with him in his closet, where I constantly

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stantly went every morning to receive my lessons,—

‘ What is the matter with you, my dear tutor ? said I ; I hope I have done nothing to offend you. — I am sure I would not willingly be guilty of deserving that you should frown upon me.’ — ‘ No, my precious charge, replied he after a pause, it is not in your nature to give offence ; but I would not incur your father’s displeasure either towards you or me : — men are apt to be jealous of the affections of their children, and I am sometimes afraid that he should think you love me almost as well as you do him.’ — ‘ Indeed I do so, — quite as well, cry’d I eagerly. — But why should he be angry at that, when he bid me use you with the same love and respect as I did himself ? ’

‘ People on some occasions, answer’d he, will be displeas’d at a too exact performance of their own commands ; and if my worthy patron, your father, should happen to be of this opinion, the consequence would infallibly be an eternal separation between us ; — he would drive me from his house, and I should never see my pretty charge again.’

‘ If you think so, return’d I, though I hate all kind of dissimulation, I will make him believe I am weary of learning of you, and that I cannot abide you.’ — ‘ Dear pretty angel, cry’d he, tenderly taking me in his arms, there is no need of going to such extremes ; — I would only have you behave with more distance towards me than you have done of late ; and it will not be amiss if you sometimes complain that I set you too hard lessons ; because if you should seem to learn too fast, he may begin to think there will soon be no occasion for a tutor.’ — ‘ Well, said I, I will do every thing you bid me ; for indeed it would al-

' most break my heart to part with you.' — Here he kissed off the tears that fell from my eyes in speaking these last words, and I returned all his endearments with the same affection as the fondest child would do those of the most indulgent parent.

It will perhaps seem a little strange, that a girl turned of thirteen, as I then was, should think or act in the manner I did; but the way in which I had been brought up left me in the same ignorance and innocence as others of six or seven years old.

I obey'd his instructions with so much exactness, that my father was far from suspecting either my folly, or the baseness of the person he had set over me: — the rest of the family were no more quick-sighted, nor could it be expected they should be so: — our house-keeper, tho' a very good, was a silly old woman, and knew nothing beyond the œconomy of those affairs committed to her charge; — the maid who waited on me was her daughter, and had been bred to think every man who wore the habit of a parson was to be worshipp'd; and the other servants were too seldom with us to have any opportunity of making discoveries.

I arriv'd at my fourteenth year; — my father kept my birth-day so far as to order something better than ordinary for dinner, and drank my health several times at table. Among other discourse concerning me, he said to Le Bris, — ' Well, ' Doctor, your pupil will now begin to think herself a woman, and I must find a husband for her ' who will be able to reward the care you have ' taken of her with a good fat benefice.' To which the fawning hypocrite replied, — ' That ' the

' the pleasure of seeing his worthy patron's daughter happy, would be to him the best benefice he could obtain.'

Nothing farther pass'd at this time on the same subject; but the next morning, when I was alone with my tutor in his closet,—‘ Do you remember, my dear miss, cry'd he, with a very melancholy air, what your father said yesterday? — ‘ You will be marry'd soon, and I shall lose you for ever.’—‘ Do not talk so, reply'd I hastily, I do not want to be marry'd; but if my father should compel me to it, all the husbands in the world should not make me forget you; — no, you shall always live with me; — I would not part with you to be a duchess.’—‘ Nor would I part with you, said he, taking me in his arms, for an archbishoprick;—and to be plain, continued he, I have received letters since I have been here, with the offers of several great livings; but I have refused them all rather than quit my dear pupil.’—‘ Have you indeed? returned I, hanging fondly on him. — Oh how kind you have been! — I should be the most ungrateful creature upon earth if I did not love you dearly for it.’—‘ But will you always keep me with you? cry'd he.’—‘ As long as I live, answer'd I.’—‘ Will you swear it? rejoin'd he.’—‘ Yes, answer'd I, a thousand and a thousand times over, if you desire it.’

The wretch did not fail to take me at my word: — I bound myself, by the most solemn imprecations that words could form, that when I became mistress of my actions he should always live with me.—After this, the hours we pass'd together were employed more in improving the foolish affection I had for him, than in any lessons for improving my

understanding.—My father imputed the slow progress I made in my studies not to any want of ability in my teacher, but to my own neglect, and often chid me for it; which I bore patiently, as I believed it the surest means of keeping my dear tutor with me: — this he took so kindly, that he told me one day, he flattered himself I lov'd him almost as well as I did my father.—‘ I hope it is ‘ no sin, cry'd I childishly, if I love you quite as ‘ well.’ — ‘ Far from it, answer'd he; you are ‘ only his daughter by nature, but you are mine ‘ by affection; — you are the child of my soul, ‘ and therefore ought to love me better.’ — ‘ I am ‘ glad of that, rejoin'd I, for indeed I love you ‘ a great deal better, — I am sure I do.’ — It will scarce be doubted but that he now bestow'd upon me those endearments I had declared myself so well satisfied with; and some minutes after, as I had turn'd to a looking-glass to adjust some disorder in my head-dress, he pull'd me to him, and making me sit upon his knee, — ‘ You are very pretty, ‘ my dear, said he, and have no defect in your ‘ shape, but being a little too flat before.’ — With these words he thrust one of his hands within my stays, telling me, that handling my breasts would make them grow, and I should then be a perfect beauty.

Not conscious of any guilt, I was ignorant of shame; and thinking every thing he did was right, made not the least resistance; but suffer'd him by degrees to proceed to liberties, which had I known the meaning of, I should have stabb'd him for attempting; but, as I have somewhere read,

By no example warn'd how to beware,
My very innocence became my snare.

It will, perhaps, be supposed, that the perfidious man did not stop here, but proceeded yet farther, to the utter completion of my dishonour; but I shall do him the justice to say, he never offer'd any such thing; though I have good reasons to believe he was prevented only by his fear of the consequences that might have attended it, to the ruin of a design which promised him more satisfaction than the enjoyment of my person..

In the ridiculous way I have been describing did we continue till I was in my seventeenth year; about which time my father being obliged to go to London on a law affair, he left the sole management of the family, as well as of myself, to his favourite chaplain, till he should return, which he expected to do in two months..

He had not been gone full three weeks before a stranger came to our house on a visit to my tutor: --- he received him with great marks of civility, and told me afterwards that he was the land-steward of a nobleman who had sent him on purpose to court his acceptance of a benefice worth near eight hundred pounds per annum. --- As I suspected not the truth of this, I was terribly frighten'd, and cry'd out, --- ' Then you will leave me at last ! ' ' It would be with an extreme reluctance I should do so,' reply'd he; ' but what can I do? --- If I should hereafter be exposed to any misfortunes, how would the world blame me for having refused such an offer? ' --- ' What misfortunes, said I, have you to fear? --- I shall always have enough to support my dear tutor.'

' My dear child, resumed he, you forget that when once you are married there will be nothing,

‘ in your power; — all will be your husband’s,
‘ who may take it into his head to turn me out of
‘ doors directly.’ — ‘ No such matter, reply’d I
‘ hastily, for I will make him promise and swear
‘ beforehand to keep you always in the family.’
‘ — Few men, said he, pay any regard, after they
‘ become husbands, to the promises and vows they
‘ made when they were lovers.—In fine, my little
‘ angel, continued he, taking me tenderly in his
‘ arms, there is but one way to secure our lasting
‘ happiness; to which if you agree, I will imme-
‘ diately refuse the great offer now made me, with
‘ all my future hopes of rising in the church, and
‘ devote myself eternally to you.’

These last words I thought so highly obliging to me, that I hung about his neck, kiss’d his cheek, and cry’d, I would do every thing he would have me; — he then told me that a writing should be drawn up between us, by which we should mutually bind ourselves, under the penalty of the half of what either should be possess’d of, never to separate.

On my ready compliance with this proposal, he ventured to make a second, even more impudent than the first; — after seeming to consider a little within himself, — ‘ I have been thinking, said he, that if the person you shall marry should happen to be of a cross, perverse nature, tho’ for his own sake he will not drive me from his house, yet he may use me so ill as to compel me to go out of it of my own accord; — suppose, therefore, you should bind yourself by the writing I have mentioned, and under the same penalty, never to marry any man without my consent.’

‘ Bleſſ

‘ Bless me; cry’d I, a little surprised, how can
 ‘ I do this! — you know I must obey my father.’
 — ‘ Heaven forbid you should do otherwise, re-
 ‘ join’d the artful hypocrite; — you may be sure I
 ‘ shall never oppose either his will, or your own
 ‘ inclination, in the choice of a husband; — what
 ‘ I speak of is only a thing of form, which, when
 ‘ shewn to your husband, will oblige him to treat
 ‘ me with gratitude and respect.’

I was entirely satisfied with this, and reply’d, I would do what he desir’d as soon as he pleased; — on which — ‘ It happens luckily, said he, that the gentleman who came here on the busineſſ I told you of was bred to the law; — I will let him know as much as is necessary of our affair, and get him to draw up a proper instrument.’ — In speaking these words he left me, and went in search of his friend, who at that time was walking in the garden, waiting, no doubt, his coming.

I had little time allowed me to reflect on what I was about to do; — Le Bris immediately returned, bringing the lawyer with him, — the latter of whom desired to receive instructions from my own mouth for what he was to write; and accordingly I repeated the ſense of the obligation I was to lay myself under, leaving it to him to put it in such words as he ſhould find proper. — If I had been miſtress of the leaſt ſhare of common reaſon, I muſt have ſeen that all this ſcheme was a thing previously concerted between those two villains; for the lawyer immediately pulled out of his pocket a large parchment, with ſeals fix’d to it, and every thing requisite to make the instrument firm and valid; — but I was infatuated, — all my little understanding was ſubjected to the will of this wicked tutor, — I

gave an implicit faith to all he said, and paid an implicit obedience to all his dictates.

The lawyer took his leave next day; and nothing material happened till within a week of the time my father was expected home, when, instead of himself, came the melancholy account that he had been seiz'd with an apoplectic fit, and tho' he recover'd from it, expired within two hours after.--- He had made his will about a year before, by which he left me sole heir of every thing he was in possession of, except a few legacies; and in case his demise should happen before I was married, or of age, appointed two gentlemen for his executors and my guardians: --- they both wrote to me, as did also my cousin *****, acquainting me that it was necessary I should come to London directly on this occasion, each inviting me to their respective houses; and, as they lived in different parts of the town, I was at liberty to chuse which I liked best.

My tutor, however, dissuaded me from accepting any of their offers, and told me he would write to a friend in London to provide a ready-furnish'd house for my reception, till things were settled, and I should resolve whether I would reside in town or country: --- accordingly he did so, and when we came within ten miles of London, we were met on the road by the lawyer, who, as I have since discover'd, was his chief agent in every thing; --- he conducted us to a house in Jermyn-street, which was indeed very neat and commodious.

It was late when we arriv'd; but I did not fail to send the next morning to my two guardians and cousin *****, who all came to see me the same day, and express'd themselves in very affectionate terms:

terms: — I presented my tutor to them, as a person for whom my father had a high esteem; on which they treated him with that respect they supposed him to deserve.

I now enter'd into a scene of life altogether new to me; — several distant relations, whom I knew only by their names, and many other gentlemen and ladies, who had been acquainted with my mother, came to pay their respects to me.—All my mornings were taken up with messages and compliments, and all my afternoons with receiving and returning visits. — How strange was the transition! — From being confined to the narrow precincts of a lone country mansion, I had now the whole metropolis to range in: — instead of the grave lessons of two old men, my ears were now continually fill'd with the flattering praises of addressing beaus; — instead of having nothing to amuse my hours, new diversions, new entertainments, crowded upon each moment; — and I was incessantly hurried from one pleasure to another, till my head grew giddy with the whirl of promiscuous pleasures.

As I was young, not ugly, and look'd upon as a rich heiress, proposals of marriage were every day made to me, all which I communicated to my tutor; but tho' many of them were much to my advantage, he always found some pretence or other for refusing his consent; and I accordingly rejected them, to the surprise of all who knew me, and the great dissatisfaction of my best friends.

He was not, however, half pleased with the gay manner in which I lived, and as soon as the affairs relating to my estate were settled, would fain have prevail'd upon me to return into the country; but I had

I had too high a relish for the diversions of the town to pay that regard to his advice I had formerly done ; and instead of complying with it, quitted the house I was in, hired another upon lease, and furnish'd it in the most elegant manner I could : — he grew very grave on my behaviour ; but as I kept firm to both the engagements I had made with him, he had no pretence to complain of my actions in other matters.

For a time, indeed, my head was not the least turn'd towards marriage ; — I thought no farther of the men than to be vain and delighted with their flatteries : — happy would it have been for me, had I continued always in this mind ; but my ill fate too soon, alas, presented me with an object which convinced me, that all the joys of public admiration are nothing, when compared to one soft hour with the youth we love, and by whom we think we are beloved.

I believe there is little need for me to say that this object, so enchanting to my senses, was the young, the handsome, the accomplish'd Amafis : — the world, to whom he made no secret of the passion he profess'd for me, was also witness in what manner I received it ; — we appear'd together in all public places ; — I treated him in all companies with a deference which shew'd the esteem I had for him : — my friends approved my choice, and the union between us was look'd upon as a thing so absolutely determined, that many believed the ceremony was already over ; when, to their great surprise, they saw at once that they were utterly broke off, and in a very short time after the ungrateful Amafis become the husband of another.

My

My tutor, on perceiving me inclined to favour Amasis more than I had ever done any of those who had hitherto address'd me, began to rail at him, and tell me a thousand ridiculous stories he pretended to have heard in relation to his conduct: — I still retained too much reverence for this wicked man to contradict what he said, but not enough to enable me to conquer my new passion; — I loved Amasis, and continued to give him daily proofs of it: — this so incensed him, that he told me one day, — that he wonder'd I would encourage the courtship of a man whom I must never expect to marry. — ‘ Why not, sir? ’ answer'd I; neither his birth nor fortune are inferior to mine.’ — ‘ Suppose them so, rejoin'd he, the most material thing is wanting, which is my consent.’ — ‘ When I gave you that power over me, said I, you promised never to thwart my inclination.’ — ‘ I did so, reply'd he; but, to be plain with you, I then expected all your inclination would be in favour of myself.’ — ‘ Yourself! cry'd I, more surprised than words can describe.’ — ‘ Yes, Alinda, resumed he, methinks the thing should not appear so odd to you: — call back to your remembrance the familiarities that have pass'd between us, and then justify, if you can, to virtue or to modesty, the least desire of giving yourself to any other man.’

Rage, astonishment, and shame, for the folly I had been guilty of, so overwhelm'd my heart at this reproach, that I had not power to speak one word, but stood looking on him with a countenance which, I believe, sufficiently expressed all those passions, while he went on in these terms:

‘ How

‘ How often, continued he, have you hung about my neck whole hours together, and by the warmest fondness tempted me to take every freedom with you but the last, which, if I had not been posseſ'd of more honour than you now shew of constancy, I also should have feiz'd, and left you nothing to bestow upon a rival ? ’

The storm which had been gathering in my breast all the time he had been speaking, now burst out with extreme violence ; — I raved, and loaded him with epithets not very becoming in me to make use of, yet not worse than he deserved : — he heard me with a sullen silence ; but when I mentioned the cruelty and baseness of upbraiding me with the follies of my childish innocence, he told me with a sneer, that he would advise me not to put that among my catalogue of complaints. — ‘ For, said he, the world will scarce believe, that a lady of fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen, had the same inclination in toying with a gentleman as a baby has with its nurse.’

I would have replied, that the manner in which I was educated kept me in the same ignorance as a baby ; but something within rose in my throat, stopping the passage of my breath, and I sunk fainting in the chair where I was sitting : — whether he was really moved with this sight, or only affected to be so, I know not ; but he ran to me, used proper means to bring me to myself, and on my recovery I found myself prest very tenderly within his arms : — his touch was now grown odious to me ; — I struggled to get loose ; — ‘ Be not thus unkind, cry'd he, holding me still faster ; you once took pleasure in my embraces, you have confess'd you did ; — oh then recall

'recall those soft ideas, and we shall both be happy.'

'No,' answered I, breaking forcibly from him, 'what then was the effect of too much innocence, would be now a guilt for which I should detest myself as much as I do you.' — 'I still love you,' said he.—'Prove it then,' cry'd I fiercely, 'by giving me up that writing which your artifices ensnared me to sign, and cease to oppose my marriage with Amasis.' — 'No, madam,' replied he; if you persist in the resolution of marrying Amasis, half your estate would be a small consolation to me for the loss of you; and you cannot sure imagine me to be weak enough to resign my claim to the one, after being deprived of the other.'

I had not patience to continue this discourse, but retired to my chamber, where, throwing myself upon the bed, I vented some part of the anguish of my mind in a flood of tears; after which, finding some little ease, I began to reflect, that tormenting myself in this manner would avail nothing, and that I ought rather to try if any possible means could be found for extricating me from the labyrinth I was entangled in.

Accordingly I arose, — muffled myself up, as well as I could to prevent being known, — took a hackney coach, and went to the chambers of an eminent lawyer; — I related to him all the circumstances of my unhappy case, concealing only the names of the persons concerned in it: — he listened attentively to what I said, and when I had done, asked me of what age I was when I entered into that engagement I now wanted to be freed from; which question I answering with sincerity, he shook his head,

head, and told me that he was sorry to assure me I could have no relief from law, and that the best, and indeed the only method I could take, was to endeavour to compromise the affair with the gentleman.

I returned home very disconsolate, and was above a week without being able to resolve on any thing; but my impatience to be united to the man I loved, and at the same time eased of the presence of the man I hated, at last determined me to follow the lawyer's advice. — I sent for my wicked tutor into my chamber, — talked to him in more obliging terms than I had done since the first discovery of his designs upon me, but represented to him the absurdity of thinking of marrying me himself; — and concluded with telling him, that if he would cancel the engagement between us, I would make him a gratuity of a thousand pounds, and also be ready to do him any other service in my power.

He rejected this proposal with the greatest contempt. — ‘ You are certainly mad, Alinda, said he, or take me to be so; a thousand pounds would be a fine equivalent, indeed, for the half of your estate, jewels, rich furniture, plate, and whatever else you are in possession of; to all which your marriage will give me an undoubted claim, and I accordingly shall seize.’ — ‘ Suppose I never marry, cry'd I.’ — ‘ Be it so, answered he, I must still continue to live with you; and what you offer for my quitting you does not amount to five years purchase of my salary and board as your chaplain.’

These words making me imagine his chief objection was to the smallness of the sum, I told him I would double, nay even treble it, for the purchase.

chase of my liberty; but he told me it would be in vain for me to tempt him with any offers of that kind; — that no consideration whatever should prevail with him to depart from the agreement between us, and he would always hold me to my bargain.

The determined air with which he spoke this, made me think it best not to urge him any farther at that time; — the next day, however, and several succeeding ones, I failed not to renew the discourse; but tho' I made use of every argument my reason could supply me with, — tho' I wept, pray'd, rav'd, — by turns cajol'd and threaten'd, all I could say, all I could do was ineffectual, — and the more I labour'd to bring him to compliance, the more stubborn his obstinacy grew.

To make any one sensible what it was I suffered in this cruel dilemma, they must also be made sensible to what an infinite degree I loved the man whom it was now impossible for me to be happy with; and both these are inexpressible: — I shall therefore only say, that I was very near being totally deprived of that little share of reason Heaven had bestowed upon me.

Amasis, to whom I had confessed the tenderness I had for him, was all this while continually soliciting me to complete our union. — One day, when he was more than ordinarily pressing on this occasion, and my heart being very full, I cry'd out, almost without knowing what I said, — ‘ Oh, ‘ Amasis, you know not what you ask, when you ‘ ask me to marry you! ’ — This exclamation surprised him; but having begun, I now went on. — ‘ You expect, said I, an estate of twelve hundred ‘ pounds a year, but I will not deceive you; you ‘ find

‘ find me worth only the half of what you have
‘ been made to hope.’—‘ When I made my ad-
‘ dressess to the lovely Alinda, answered he, I had
‘ no eye to the fortune she might bring me;—
‘ but wherefore this fruitless trial of my love?’—
‘ Your guardians have shewn me the writings of
‘ your estate, and I know to a single hundred what
‘ you are possess’d of.’—‘ Suppose, rejoin’d I, that
‘ I should have previously disposed of the one half
‘ of what otherwise our marriage would have
‘ given you?’—‘ I will suppose no such thing,
‘ reply’d he; it cannot be.’—‘ It both can and is,’
said I, bursting into tears; I have unwarily en-
ter’d into an engagement, by which I forfeit the
moiety of all I am mistress of, even to my very
jewels, if ever I marry any man, except on cer-
tain conditions, which condition I am now well
assured I never can obtain.’

‘ Death! cry’d he, starting up in a fury,—
‘ What condition, --- when, --- where, --- to
‘ whom, on what account was this engagement
‘ made?’---Shame would not let me answer to these
interrogatories, and I remained in a kind of stupid
silence. --- ‘ If by any artifices, pursued he, you
‘ have been seduced to sign a compact of this wild
‘ nature, unfold the whole of the affair, and de-
pend, that either the laws or this avenging arm
‘ shall do you justice.’---I now repented that I had
so rashly divulged any part of this fatal secret,
---not that I should have been glad to have seen my
wicked tutor punish’d, but I knew that on the least
attempt made for my redress, he would infallibly
expose the follies I had been guilty of in regard to
him; and when compared with the loss of Amasis,
my fortune, or even my life itself, seemed a less
terrible misfortune; for this reason, therefore, I
refused the entreaties of a beloved lover, and
screen’d

screen'd the villainy of a wretch whom my soul abhorr'd. In fine, I would reveal no more than I had done. --- Amasis left me in a very ill humour, and the next morning I received a billet from him containing these stabbing lines :

To Miss ALINDA *****.

‘ MADAM,

‘ I HAVE been considering on the amazing account you gave me last night ; and as you refuse to discover either the person with whom you made this engagement, or the motives which induced you to it, can look on it as no other than a contract with some gentleman, once happy in your affections. --- A second-hand passion neither suits with the delicacy of my humour, nor to encroach upon the rights of another with my honour : --- I shall therefore desist troubling you with any future visits, but shall be always glad to hear of your welfare, which I despair of doing till you prevail upon yourself to be just to your first vow ; sacrifice the affection you have for me to the obligations you are under to my rival : --- I yield to his prior title all the late glorious hopes I had conceived, and wish you more happy with him than it is now in your power to make

‘ Your humble servant,

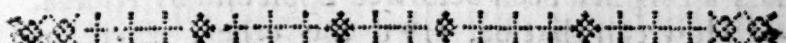
‘ AMASIS.’

Here ended all my hopes of happiness ; --- all the soft ideas of love and marriage vanish'd for ever from my breast, and were succeeded by others of the most dreadful nature : --- for several weeks I abandon'd myself to grief and to despair ; but pride at length got the better of these passions ; and to conceal the real situation of my heart from the enquiring

quiring world, I all at once affected to be madly gay, and ran into such extravagancies, as, without being criminal in fact, justly drew upon me the severest censures.

But nature will not bear a perpetual violence;--- grief and despair were the strongest passions in me: --- in the midst of dancing, tears were ready to start from my eyes, and sighs from my bosom, which when I endeavour'd to suppress, they recoil'd upon my heart, and shook my frame with the most terrible revolutions: — the marriage of Amasis seconded the blow our parting had given; — I could no longer dissemble what I felt, — no longer appear the giddy thoughtless libertine, but flew from one extreme to the other: — I now would see no company, shut myself up in my chamber, denied access to my best friends, and never went abroad. — I suffered not Le Bris to come into my presence; and I believed, perceiving me so resolute, he would have accepted of a sum of money to have quitted my house entirely; but I had now done with the world,--- had lost in Amasis all I valued in it, --- and would not give the monster, whom I justly look'd upon as the source of all my misfortunes, any more than I was compell'd to do, his bare board and salary.

Behold, by these memoirs, the beginning and progress of my miseries,---the end is near at hand: --- Death is already busy at my heart, and allows no time to apologize for the errors of my conduct; — pity is all my ashes can expect.



C H A P. VII.

Contains a very brief account of some passages subsequent to the foregoing story, with the author's remarks upon the whole.

AS I know very well that solidity has but a small share in the composition of the lady whom Alinda had intended to entrust with the publication of her memoirs, I thought the surest way of having the will of the deceased performed, was not to trouble a person of her character with the perusal of them, but to take the opportunity of my Invisibilityship to present them to the world myself, which I accordingly have done.

And now, as I doubt not but the reader will be glad of being informed farther concerning Le Bris, I shall relate such particulars as have come to my knowledge.

It must be concluded, that this unworthy preceptor, in looking over the papers of Alinda, had either not observed, or afterwards forgot, that the ring he had just taken from among her other jewels was the very same mentioned in her letter to her friend, otherwise he would certainly have had cunning enough to have replaced it where he found it.

Mr. ***** soon recollecting what his cousin had said to him in regard of this little legacy, and missing it from her other trinkets, made a strict enquiry what was become of it.—Le Bris having had her keys in his possession, was one of the first interrogated; and on being so, boldly replied, that such

such a ring had been bestowed upon him by Alinda. --- ' How can that be, cry'd the other, when but three days before her death she bequeathed it to a lady of her acquaintance, and insisted on my promise of delivering it to her ? ' --- ' She must then be delirious, said the parson ; but however that might be, Heaven forbid I should detain what is even suspected to be the right of another ; and with these words presented the ring to Mr. ***** , who received it from him without the least ceremony.

This affair, notwithstanding the hypocritical manner in which the ring was return'd, gave Mr. ***** room to imagine there had been some foul play in relation to Alinda's effects : --- the steward prov'd by his books, that he had paid into her hands, a week before her death, two hundred and fifty pounds in specie, and more than twice that sum in bank-bills, being arrears he had receiv'd from the tenants ; --- it seem'd unlikely to them that she could have disposed of the money, much less have had any occasion to change the bills in so short a time ; --- orders were therefore sent to the Bank to stop the payment of such numbers till further notice ; but the precaution came too late : --- the person who had secreted them had been already there, and converted all his paper into cash.

The heir, however, was confident that he had been defrauded ; --- he consulted counsel upon it, who all advised him to have recourse to equity : --- whether Le Bris had any hint given him of what was intended to be done against him, or whether his own guilty conscience made him only apprehend it, is uncertain ; but he had not courage to stand the test of examination ; --- he fled the kingdom, after having thrown aside that robe, which, had he been known

known for what he truly was, would long before have been stripped from his sacrilegious shoulders.

But Providence would not permit him to enjoy his ill-got spoils, nor a life he had devoted to such wicked purposes: --- designing to turn trader at Jamaica, he embarked for that place ;---but the vessel being overtaken by a storm, was lost almost in sight of shore, and he, with many other perhaps less guilty persons, perished in the wreck.---This last piece of intelligence I received from his mother, whom, tho' he had supported during the life of Alinda, to prevent being exposed by her clamours, he now left penniless, destitute, and starving, in an extreme old age.

Thus did the vengeance of heaven at last overtake the wretch, who, besides his other impieties, had been guilty of the most cruel ingratitude and breach of trust, in imposing upon the simplicity of a young creature committed to his care, and utterly destroying all the views of his generous patron and benefactor.

As for the unfortunate Alinda, tho' it is certain her conduct cannot be wholly justified, yet, according to my opinion, it ought not to be wholly condemned: --- it would be passing too severe a judgment, to impute the fondness she expressed for her wicked tutor to a wanton inclination; --- if we consider the various arts of her seducer; --- the commands laid on her by her father to love and obey him as himself; --- the manner in which she was brought up; --- the perfect ignorance she was kept in of the customs of the world, and how other young ladies behaved; we shall find that these are all of them very strong pleas in her defence, and

not forbear pitying the mistakes of such artless innocence.

I wish as much could be alledged in her behalf on the score of her behaviour after breaking off with Amasis:---the excesses into which she ran, in order to conceal the disquiets of her mind for the loss of that favourite lover, too evidently shew that she sacrificed two of the most valuable characteristics of womanhood, her prudence and her modesty, to one of the very worst,---her pride.

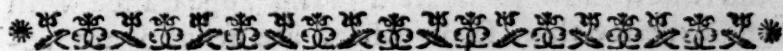
Nor can I offer any thing in vindication of the last stages of her life: --- if convinced of her error, in being perpetually among promiscuous company, it was flying to an almost as inexcusable extreme, to shut herself from her best friends, and avoid the society of those whose conversation might have dissipated her chagrin, and at the same time improved her understanding ;---to do this, seems to me, I must confess, to have more the favour of despair, than of virtue or true fortitude.

There was, doubtless, a certain giddy propensity in her nature, which wanted to be corrected by reason, example, precept, authority, and the rudiments of a good education ; all which she was deny'd: and it must therefore be acknowledged, that both her faults and misfortunes were entirely owing to the caprice and credulity of her father, and the base designs of the person appointed to be her governor and instructor.

END of the FIRST BOOK.



THE
INVISIBLE SPY.



BOOK II.

CHAP. I.

The author, by the help of his Invisibility, has discovered such a contrast in the behaviour of two married couple of distinction, as he thinks would be the utmost injustice to the public to conceal.

PLACENTIA, after a long and passionate courtship, was at last wedded to Dalmatius;—she brought him an ample fortune, a very agreeable person, and an unblemished character;—she had studied the duties of a wife before she became so, and afterwards practised them in the strictest manner.—Whenever she found him gay, she heightened his good humour by her own sprightliness; and when fullen and perverse, as was too often the case, she

E 2 endea-

endeavoured to dissipate his chagrin either by playing on her spinnet, or telling him some diverting story.—Without seeming to consult his palate, she always took care to put such dishes into her bill of fare as she had perceived he eat with most satisfaction.—Whatever company suited his taste were sure to be often invited by her, and entertain'd with the greatest marks of esteem and complaisance. Her whole thoughts, indeed, were taken up with obliging and making him happy:—she had no will,—no inclination of her own;—both were entirely regulated by his; and, to add to all this, she was an excellent economist, understood the management of a family perfectly well, and knew how to make a grand appearance with less expence than some others are at who are accounted contemptibly parsimonious.

What would some husbands give to be bless'd with so virtuous, so tender, so endearing a companion? Dalmatius, instead of placing this jewel next his heart, hung it carelessly upon his sleeve; either not knowing, or not regarding the true value of it.

During the course of several Invisible Visitations I made at their house, never did I see him treat her in any degree proportionable to her merit:—when in his best humours, he returned the caresses she gave him only with a cold indifference; but when any thing abroad had happened to thwart his views, either of pleasure or ambition, no man could behave with more churlishness at home:—but the manner in which this couple behaved to each other will best appear from their own words, which I shall give a short specimen of on two different occasions.

They

They were to go out together one day, to call on some friends who were to accompany them on a party of pleasure; — the landau waited at the door, — he had just finished dressing, and sent up to know if his wife was ready: — the message could be scarce delivered before she came flying into the room, on which the following dialogue ensued:

Placentia. ‘ I hope I have not made you wait for me?’

Dalmatius. ‘ Not at all, — it wants some minutes of our appointment; but I know you women are generally so long equipping yourselves, that I was willing to hasten you.’

Placentia. ‘ I should know but little of the value of time, if I wasted much of it in dressing. — But pray, my dear, how do you like me to-day?’

Dalmatius. ‘ Like you? — that’s an odd question; — why — as well as ever I did.’

Placentia. ‘ I should be miserable if I did not think you did; — but I mean, how do you like my cloaths? — You see I am all in new.’

Dalmatius. ‘ Are you indeed? I should have seen nothing of it, if you had not told me: — I never mind what women have on.’

Placentia. ‘ Then I am disappointed, my dear; for I assure you I consulted your fancy more than my own in the choice I made of this silk, as I have heard you say an hundred times, I believe, that you thought blue and silver the most agreeable mixture that could be.’

Dalmatius. ‘ So it is; but it may not happen to become every body. — however, I must do you the justice to say, you look well enough in it, and I believe every body will think so.’

Placentia. ‘ If you think so, my dear, it is all
‘ I wish.’

In speaking this she took hold of his hand, and kissed it with the greatest warmth of affection :— he returned the favour with a slight salute upon her cheek ; then looking on his watch, said he believed it was time to go, and went down stairs, the following.

The truth of the affair is this :— Dalmatius is not only vain and insolent in his nature, but also amorous and inconstant to an excess ; tho’ he no longer had any eyes for the charms of his fair wife, his heart was but too susceptible to those of other women.— Miranda for some time engrossed all his devoirs ; nor could her being married to the most intimate of his friends restrain him from making his unlawful addresses to her ; nor the vow she had taken at the altar deter her from gratifying an inclination he had found the way to inspire.

The husband of this lady is a man of so much indolence, and so little delicacy, that he never gives himself the least concern about what pleasures his wife may indulge herself in, provided she offers no interruption to those he takes himself : — there are some indeed, who say, that on their marriage they mutually agreed to allow each other a perfect latitude in this point ; — but be that as it may, Miranda seems under no apprehensions of her conduct being called in question by him.

Her amour with Dalmatius soon became so notorious, that it was in the mouth of every one :— Placentia herself was the last that gave credit to it ; that excellent lady would not suffer her heart to enter-

entertain ill thoughts of the man she was bound to love ; nor could any thing but the testimony of her own eyes have convinced her of the guilty truth.

Miranda came to visit her one day when she happened to be abroad ; but Dalmatius being at home, the presence of his wife was little wanted : —she soon returned, however, and being told that Miranda was above, ran hastily up to receive her ; but not finding her in the room where company were usually introduced, yet thinking she heard the murmur of voices very near, she stepp'd towards the place whence it seemed to proceed, and peeping through the key-hole of an adjacent chamber, saw her husband and the lady in a posture such as could leave her no doubt of their criminal conversation.

The sudden shock at first transfix'd her feet ; — but presently recovering herself, she retired from the guilty scene, and went into her own chamber ; where, finding her woman at work, she ordered her to go immediately down, and forbid the servants to take any notice of her being come home : — ‘ I hear, said she, that Miranda is below, and ‘ I am not very well, and would not see any com- ‘ pany at this time.’

The woman being withdrawn to do as she was commanded, Placentia threw herself into an easy chair, and fell into a profound reverie : — I was present all this while ; but my Belt of Invisibility did not enable me to penetrate into her thoughts, till seeming as if determined on something she had been debating within herself, she rose suddenly from her seat, and burst into these words : ‘ No, —he shall never know I think him false ; much less that I have detected him : —reproaches would

' avail me nothing, and might harden him in his crime ;— I am his wife, — we must always live together, or be subjected to the ridicule of a laughing and censorious world :---prudence, therefore, as well as duty, commands me to conceal the shameful discovery I have made ; and rather endeavour, by adding tenderness, if possible, to reclaim him, and oblige him to see I am at least as worthy of his affection as Miranda.'

I left her in this resolution, and found that for several days she strictly adhered to it ; excepting only that she could not so far dissemble her uneasiness as to be able to receive Miranda in the manner she had formerly done : she therefore desisted from making her any farther invitations to her house, and always excused herself from accepting any sent to her by that lady.

This was enough, however, to give the lovers some apprehensions that she suspected their intrigue : — But Miranda was of too vain and gay a temper to feel any inquietude on this score ; and the ungrateful Dalmatius, finding himself treated by his wife with the same love and complaisance as ever, gave himself not the trouble either to examine, or be under the least concern, whether such behaviour proceeded from her ignorance of his fault, or her discretion in overlooking it.

But the sweetest disposition may be imbibited by continual provocations : — Placentia, finding that all the efforts she made for regaining the affections of her husband were ineffectual, began by degrees to grow more remiss in her care of pleasing : — not that she ever departed from the essential duties of a wife ; — she only ceased the practice of those

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those which, as the case stood between them, might justly be called works of supererogation.

Being to have a great rout at her house, just as she was going to send cards to invite the company, Dalmatius came into the room; and having looked over the catalogue of names, on finding Miranda's not there, began with an unusual haughtiness to interrogate her on that occasion; and she, now for the first time, replied to what he said with as much indifference as she had formerly done with submission.

Dalmatius. ‘ How happens it, madam, that Miranda is left out among the number of your guests ? ’

Placentia. ‘ I had forgot her.’

Dalmatius. ‘ It is well then that I reminded you ; — but methinks a lady of her rank and character in the world might well have deserved a place in your remembrance.’

Placentia. ‘ It may be so ; — but one cannot invite every body.’

Dalmatius. ‘ When any body is invited to our house, especially on these occasions, it would be the utmost absurdity to leave Miranda out ; — therefore I insist upon her coming, for your own sake.’

Placentia. ‘ Oh, sir, you need not give yourself any trouble on that score, I am certainly a judge how to behave to my own acquaintance ; — but if you are so desirous of having Miranda here to-morrow, the best way is for you to send a card as from yourself ; — I doubt not but the invitation will be full as agreeable, and as readily comply'd with.’

Dalmatius. ‘ You talk in an odd manner, madam ; — and now I think on it, — I met Miranda the other day in the Park, and she complained to me of a strange change in you towards her ; — that you have never returned the last visit she made you ; — have scarce spoke to her in any public assembly, and seem’d to shun her presence as much as possible. --- Pray what is the meaning of all this ? ’

Placentia. ‘ That, sir, is a question which perhaps neither you nor she would thank me for answering directly.

Dalmatius. ‘ I understand you, madam, however ; — you have got notions in your head not becoming in you to indulge, nor worthy any endeavours of mine to expel ; — I would only have you be wiser, and consider that of all domestic animals a jealous wife is the most contemptible.’

He flung out of the room with these words, and all the tokens of disdain and indignation in his countenance, leaving Placentia in a confusion not easy to be described : — I could perceive, however, by the gestures of that unhappy lady, that she repented having gone so far, yet knowing herself the only injured, could not yield either to recede from her resolution on the account of Miranda, or make use of any attempts to soften so ill-founded a resentment in the husband.

It is now said that his amour with Miranda is on the decline ; — that a new face has utterly eclipsed all the charms he had lately found in her’s ; and that Placentia has at least this consolation under her misfortune, to find that no one beauty has the power long to retain the heart she has lost ; — so just are the poet’s words :

When

When fix'd to one, love safe at anchor rides,
And dares the fury of the winds and tides ;
But losing once that hold, to the wide ocean borne,
It drives at will, to ev'ry wave a scorn.

Marriage, tho' a sacred institution, — tho' ordained by heaven to bestow the supremest felicity we mortals are capable of enjoying, becomes the severest curse, when souls ill-suited to each other are joined in its indissoluble bonds ; and it too often happens, that those who by nature and education are qualified to give and receive the greatest happiness, are rendered the more miserable, through the perverseness of a bad-temper'd partner.

Montelion has been twice married ; — he has experienced both all the contentments, and all the quietudes of that state, with women of humours as widely different as light and darkness, — I had almost said, as heaven from hell : — his first lady, as she was excelled by none in exterior perfections, so she was equalled but by very few in the more valuable endowments of the mind : — his life, while in possession of this treasure, was one continued scene of harmony and love ; but soon, alas, the blissful prospect vanish'd ! — the fair, the virtuous, the tender Erminia died ; and, to add to the misfortune of her disconsolate husband, left no pledge behind her of their mutual affection.

Though in that season of life when amorous flames are at their highest bent, those of Montelion seemed all buried in the grave of his dear Erminia ; — he remained for several years the lonely occupier of a widowed bed : — at last, however, the ardent desire of having an heir for his estate, got

omewhat the better of his melancholy, and determined him on a second venture.

In the choice he made, he consulted neither fortune nor beauty; the one, indeed, he wanted not; —and as for the other, since his Erminia's death, all women were equal to him, and he regarded the lovely and unlovely with the same indifference — he therefore married Ferocia, merely because she was one of the daughters of a fruitful family, and likely to answer the only end which induced him once more to become a husband.

Every body was astonish'd at these nuptials, and much more so on the knowledge of Ferocia's behaviour afterwards;—but I shall present my reader with the character of this lady, as it was given by an impartial hand in a letter to a friend.

Ferocia, now the wife of Montelion, is a woman plain in her person,—weak in her understanding,—capricious and fantastic in her humour,—unpolish'd in her manners; and, what is worse than all, insufferably vain and insolent on her new dignity, without one grain of true love or gratitude for the man who has raised her to it.

My gift of Invisibility assisted me in proving the truth of the above in all its parts;—further I will not pretend to say; for tho' it is a vulgar adage, that, ‘Where there is no modesty, there is little sign of honesty;’ and tho’ I have heard severe censures pass’d upon her virtue; yet I never could make any discoveries to her prejudice on that score, and am apt to believe, that the rampant airs she gives herself among the men, are, in reality, more owing to a hoidenly than an amorous disposition.

Monte-

Montelion seems to see her behaviour in the same light I do ; yet, for the sake of his own honour, cannot but wish she would act with more reserve.—They had not been married above three months when he was seized with a fit of the gout which confined him to his apartment :—Ferocia came in cover'd over with jewels, and blazing like a star ; and, without expressing any concern for his indisposition, told him that she was going to lady Primwell's route ; on which ensued the following dialogue between them :

Montelion. ‘ I flatter'd myself, madam, with having the happiness of your company at home this evening, as I am not in a condition to stir out.’

Ferocia. ‘ Oh heavens ! I should make the worst nurse in the world : what good would my staying do you ? ’

Montelion. ‘ A great deal, madam, and I hope I need say no more to engage you not to leave me.’

Ferocia. ‘ Indeed, my lord, I must go, I have given my promise.’

Montelion. ‘ You will be easily excused ;—no-body will expect a wife on a party of pleasure, when they know her husband is confined by pain. —Come, my dear, you must not think that staying at home one night is an act of too much complaisance to a man who would refuse nothing for your satisfaction.’

In speaking this he drew her gently towards him, and gave her two or three very tender kisses ; but in doing so, a little snuff he had between his thumb and finger happened to scatter on her glove ; on which she started from him, and returned his kind expressions in these terms :

Ferocia.

Ferocia. ‘ Pish, how silly this is! --- You have
• spoil’d my gloves with your nasty snuff. --- Here
• John, William, run one of you to my dressing-
• room, and bid Faddle bring me a pair of gloves
• in a minute.

Montelion. ‘ Don’t put yourself into a passion,
• my dear, but sit down and resolve to oblige
• me ; --- I’ll call for cards, and we’ll have a game
• at picquet.’

She made no reply, but hung down her head,
and stood counting the sticks of her fan till Faddle
came into the room.

Ferocia. ‘ Where are the gloves ?

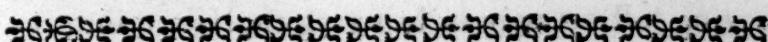
Faddle. ‘ Madam, I thought the fellow was
• mistaken, when he bid me bring gloves, as your
• ladyship had just now a clean pair.

Montelion. ‘ Aye, Mrs. Faddle, there is no oc-
• casion ; rather get your lady’s night-dress ready ;
• for she has chang’d her mind, and does not go
• abroad.

Ferocia. ‘ Indeed I both must and will, my lord.
• --- Do you imagine, that because you are sick, I
• must mortify myself, and be new’d up with you
• till I am sick too ? --- No, --- no, I am not weak
• enough to comply with so unreasonable a re-
• quest ; therefore adieu, I shall scarce see you till
• late, and hope then to find your lordship better.’

She waited not for any reply he might have
made; but flounced out of the room, followed by
her woman. — Montelion soon after heard the
footman call’d to attend her ladyship, and the char-
riot drive from the door. — How would some
husbands have resented such usage, even from the
most lovely of womankind ! yet Montelion bore it
without any shew of impatience from one endow’d

with no charms to excite either love or respect ; --- his tameness, however, is not owing to any meanness of spirit in him, but rather to his good sense : — he does not care to have his domestic affairs become the talk of the town, nor to come to an open rupture with the woman he has made his wife ; and having in vain essay'd all the means that prudence and good-nature could suggest, to bring her to a more reasonable way of thinking, he has at last given over the attempt ; — seems not to regard whatever she does, but endeavours to lose the thoughts of his private disquiets in the toils of public business.



C H A P. II.

Relates a strange instance of bigotry and enthusiasm in a parent.

NOthing is so desirable as religion, --- nothing is so truly amiable as piety : --- what blessings does it not diffuse to all who are within the reach of its influence ? --- From it all other virtues are derived, and by it alone we are enabled to act with vigour ; --- yet how often have we seen this heavenly quality perverted into its very opposite ; and, from the spirit of meekness, benevolence, mercy, charity, and universal love, become the spirit of pride, contention, envy, hatred, and persecution ! — like the arch-angel, who standing nearest to the throne of glory, precipitated himself into the lowest hell.

Bigotry and superstition are the surest engines which the subtle enemy of mankind makes use of for our destruction ; --- all other crimes carry their stings with them ; conscience reproaches us for doing

doing amiss, and we fall not again into the like without extreme remorse and shame; but the man possess'd of this holy frenzy of the mind glories in his perseverance, because he looks upon it as the highest virtue.

A gentleman, whom I shall distinguish by the name of Flaminio, had attained to the age of 50, without having been known to be guilty of any one thing which could call in question either his honour, good nature, or good-sense; — he had lived caress'd by his friends, respected by his acquaintance, and almost adored by his tenants and dependants: — he had one son and one daughter, and having lost his wife in bringing the latter into the world, he never ventured on a second, but laid out all his cares on the education of these two.

Adario, for so I shall call the son, having finish'd his studies to the satisfaction of all those who had the charge of instructing him, in order to complete the fine gentleman, was sent to make the tour of Europe, under the care of a discreet and experienced governor.—Isabinda, the daughter, remained at home with her father, and being extremely beautiful, and mistress of every accomplishment befitting her sex and rank, attracted the love and admiration of as many as had opportunity to be witness of her perfections..

Being such as I have described, it may easily be supposed, that in a town like this, there were not few who declared themselves her lovers;—Lysimor was among the number of those who had the least to fear, and the most to hope for, in his addresses to her: — he had an agreeable person, was descended of a good family, and was heir to an estate adequate to his birth;—he had been fellow-student with

with Adario ; and though being some years older, he had left the University before him, they had always kept up a correspondence : — he was introduced to the acquaintance of the sister by the intimacy he had with the brother, who fail'd not, before he went abroad, to recommend his friend's pretensions to her in the strongest terms.

He it was, indeed, who alone had the power of pleasing her ; — her young heart presently distinguished him from all his rivals : but her modesty and discretion would not permit her to give him any marks of a peculiar regard, till authoriz'd to do so by the person she had always been taught to consider as the sole disposer of her fate.

Lysimor, who had also been bred in the most strict obedience, made not his court to Isabinda without having first communicated the passion he had for her to his father, and received his approbation : — the two old gentlemen had afterwards an interview on this occasion ; and Flaminio being perfectly satisfied with the proposals made by the other, readily gave his consent, on condition his daughter, whose inclination he said he would never go about to force, should have no objection to the match.

The same evening, as they were sitting together at supper, Flaminio related to his daughter all that had pass'd between him and the father of Lysimor ; and added, that he look'd upon him as a very deserving young fellow ; — that his birth and fortune were unexceptionable ; — and that if she had no aversion to his person, he should be heartily glad of an alliance with him.

Isabinda

Ifabinda blush'd like the sun just peeping from a cloud, on hearing her father speak in this manner, and could scarce recover herself from the glad surprize enough to tell him, that since he was pleased with such a union, she should be all obedience to his will : --- she said no more ; but the soft confusion she was in, and the joy which she could not restrain from sparkling in her eyes, sufficiently testified how much her inclinations corresponded with her duty. — ‘ Well then, resumed he, from this time forward receive Lysimor as the person by heaven and me ordain'd to be your husband.’

I leave it to my fair readers to conceive what delightful images must fill the mind of Ifabinda, after this sanction to an affection which hitherto she had not dared to indulge, yet had it not in her power to subdue ; --- for my own part, tho' I was present during all the conversation she had with her father on this head, I left the house when she retir'd to her chamber, which she did more early than ordinary that night, I guess, to have an opportunity of giving a loose to the transports of her mind.

As for Lysimor, the joy he felt on being acquainted with what his father had done for him, was very much allay'd by the perfect ignorance he was in of having made any impression on the heart of his charming mistress ; --- he went to visit her the next day, hoping, yet trembling for the event ; but soon the lovely maid put an end to his suspense, by assuring him, that for his sake alone she could resolve, without reluctance, on changing her condition.

Not only the lovers themselves, but both their parents also seem'd equally impatient for the consummation of these nuptials ; — a short day was appointed

appointed for the celebration ; — the articles of settlement and jointure were drawing up ; — new habits, new coaches, new equipages, — all necessary preparations were carrying on with the utmost expedition, when lo ! — a sudden and unexpected storm bore down at once the pleasing prospect of their hopes, — for ever dash'd their expected joys, and spread a lasting scene of desolation and despair. — How vainly, alas, do we depend on mortal happiness ! — The gaudy bubble fleets before us like the wind, — eludes our grasp, and mocks the idle chace, — as Sir Robert Howard justly expresses it,

Short is th' uncertain reign and pomp of mortal pride ?
 New turns and changes ev'ry day
 Are of inconstant Chance the constant arts ;
 Soon she gives, soon takes away,
 She comes, embraces, nauseates you, and parts.

Flaminio, from being the most cheerful, good-natur'd man that could be of his age, became all at once transform'd into the most sullen, gloomy, and discontented ; — from expressing the utmost eagerness for his daughter's wedding, he now appear'd wholly negligent of every thing relating to it : — when the father of Lysimor, and the lawyer employ'd to draw the marriage writings, went to his house, he order'd his servants to say he was from home ; — made several tradesmen carry back the things he had bespoke for the solemnity ; — and, in fine, put an entire stop to all he had been so solicitous in forwarding.

The father of Lysimor began to think himself affronted by this proceeding ; and both the lovers were amazed and troubled beyond description at it ; but tho' the young gentleman came once or twice every day to visit his dear mistress, Flaminio so carefully avoided his presence, that he could get no oppor-

opportunity of complaining to him, and Isabinda was too much terrified by the unusual austerity of his looks to have the courage to open her lips to him on this score.

She was one afternoon alone in the fore-parlour, waiting the approach of Lysimor, when her father, who was in a back room, call'd her to him; — she immediately obeyed, and on her entrance was accosted by him in this manner:

Flaminio. ‘ Well, Isabinda, I suppose you expect Lysimor here presently?’

Isabinda. ‘ Yes, Sir, — it is near the hour when he generally visits me.’

Flaminio. ‘ His company may be spared at this time; — I have something to say to you, and would not be interrupted: — I have therefore given orders to the servants to tell him, when he comes, that you are gone abroad.’

Isabinda. ‘ He will scarce believe that, because I promised to take a walk with him in the Mall after tea; but if you require my attendance, I will dismiss him the moment he comes.’

Flaminio. ‘ No, it shall be as I have said; — if you marry him, you will have opportunities enough to see each other; and if you do not, it will be best for you not to have settled your affections upon him.’

Isabinda. ‘ Sir, I should never have entertain'd the least thoughts of marrying either him or any other man, without having first received your commands to do so.’

Flaminio. ‘ However that may be, events we think most near are often the farthest from being accomplish'd; and for that reason a young maid ought never to dispose of her heart till it is accompany'd by her hand.’

Isabinda.

Isabinda. ‘ I hope, Sir, that Lysimor has done
‘ nothing to forfeit the good-will you once had
‘ for him.’

‘ *Flaminio.* ‘ No, no, I have nothing to say
‘ against the young gentleman; — and should still
‘ approve of him for a son-in-law; —but—’

Isabinda. ‘ But what? — I beseech you, Sir,
‘ keep me not on a rack more cruel than death.’

‘ *Flaminio.* ‘ I am sorry to see you so much con-
cern’d on his account; — I hoped to have found
you more indifferent; but, since your inclina-
tions are so deeply engag’d, wish from my soul
there was a possibility for your union.’

Isabinda. ‘ Ah, Sir, what prevents it?’

‘ *Flaminio.* ‘ A father’s everlasting happiness or
misery.’

These words, the emphasis with which he ut-
ter’d them, and the horror that appear’d in his
countenance, frightened the poor young lady almost
into fits; -- she started, --- trembled, --- and not able
to comprehend the meaning of what she heard,
the most terrible ideas came into her mind, which
made her rather dread than wish an explanation.

She stood pale as a ghost, and motionless as a
statue, while her father, greatly agitated, walked
backwards and forwards in the room with irregular
and disorder’d steps: --- both remain’d speechless
for some time; --- at last, --- ‘ I cannot as yet,
‘ said he, bring myself to relieve the suspense I see
‘ you in, but will do it soon; — retire there-
fore, my dear Isabinda, to your chamber, con-
tinued he with a deep sigh, and invoke the Al-
mighty Dispenser of blessings to give you that
composure of mind, which can alone enable you
to support chearfully whatever fate he is pleased
to ordain for you.’

She

She went to her chamber as commanded ; but whether to pray or weep I will not pretend to inform my readers : I remained with Flaminio while he staid below, which was not long, then follow'd him up to his closet, where he shut himself in, pulling the door so hastily after him that I had not time to enter ; but peeping thro' the key-hole, I saw he had thrown himself prostrate on the floor, and with his hands and eyes lifted up to heaven, seemed very earnest in devotion ; — I left him in this posture, and return'd home much surprised at what I had seen and heard.

Impatient, however, to get some farther light into an affair which at present appeared so mysterious to me, I went the next morning to Flaminio's house ; — I enter'd Isabinda's chamber with a servant who was carrying in a dish of chocolate : — that unhappy lady was sitting leaning her elbow on a table and her head upon her hand, her eyes red with the late fallen tears, and all symptoms of despair and grief about her ; — but nothing being to be learnt here, I went in search of Flaminio, whom I found in his dressing-room ; — he was in a musing posture, but had a countenance much more serene than the day before : — I had not been many minutes with him before he rung his bell for a footman, whom he order'd to fetch Isabinda to him ; — she presently came, and I was witness of the following extraordinary dialogue :

Flaminio. ‘ Sit down, my child ; — I was to blame to leave you in the perplexity I did last night ; but it was occasion'd only by my too great tenderness ; — I could not easily resolve to tell you a thing which I fear'd would make you wish I had lov'd you less.’

Isabinda.

Isabinda. ‘ Sir, I have always look’d upon your paternal affection to me as the greatest blessing of my life.’

Flaminio. ‘ I believe you have ; and I had never any cause to think you did not return that affection with an adequate proportion of filial love and duty.’

Isabinda. ‘ I flatter myself, sir, that no one of my actions has ever shewn the contrary.’

Flaminio. ‘ None, indeed, my dearest child : —I ought not therefore to have doubted of your ready compliance in a thing on which my soul’s eternal peace depends. — Tell me, my Isabinda, would you not willingly forego a trifling satisfaction to insure your father’s happiness both here and hereafter ?’

Isabinda. ‘ I should else, sir, be unworthy of the goodness you have shewn me.’

Flaminio. ‘ Well then, my dearest Isabinda, I will no longer hesitate to make thee the confidante of a secret which hitherto has never escap’d my own bosom : — it is a story will very much surprise thee ; — but see thou mark me well, and be attentive to every particular.’

Isabinda. ‘ You may be certain, sir, I will be so.’

Flaminio. ‘ Know then, that going into the country to take possession of that estate which you have heard devolved on me by the death of my uncle, I fell into the acquaintance of a young lady in the neighbourhood, called Harriot ; — she was handsome, — I had a heart entirely free, and I became, as I then thought, violently in love with her ; but marriage being a thing of too serious a nature to be agreeable to my inclinations at that time, the addresses I made to her were extremely private : — such as they were, however, they succeeded but too well ;

‘ well ; and, on my promising to make her my wife, obtain’d all the gratifications my passion could require.

‘ Having finish’d the business which had brought me thither, I set out soon after on my return to London : --- Harriot took leave of me without much regret, being to follow in a few days, with her father and the whole family, the winter season coming on : --- on her arrival she sent me immediate notice, and I provided a proper place for our private interviews, which were not seldom, my amorous desires being yet unsatiated.

▲ Perhaps her youth, beauty, and the extreme tenderness she had for me, might have engaged me for a much longer time, had not the charms of your dear mother render’d all those of the whole sex besides contemptible in my eyes : I ador’d her from the first moment I beheld her ; --- the flame she inspir’d me with was widely different from what I had ever felt before ; marriage was no more a bugbear to me ; --- on the contrary, I languish’d to be link’d in those bonds with a person of such distinguish’d merit, and the means of attaining that felicity engross’d all my thoughts.

‘ I now made a thousand excuses to avoid meeting poor Harriot ; and when her repeated solicitations drew me sometimes to her, my behaviour was so cool, so chang’d from what it was, that she could not but see into the cause ; --- she grew jealous, inquisitive, and soon discover’d my honourable attachment.

‘ Tears, reproaches, and complaints, now furnish’d me with a pretence to quarrel ; --- I told her I would see her no more, and indeed she put it out of my power to break my word ; for in three days after we had parted in this manner she died, --- not without some suspicion of poison, as

‘ I have heard it whisper’d ;—but whether she had recourse, in reality, to any such desperate method to rid her of a life she was grown weary of, or whether grief alone did the work of fate, I know not ; but am too certain, however that might be, my ingratitude was the cruel cause, though she was too generous ever to declare it, and not one of all her numerous kindred or acquaintance had the least intimation of the intercourse between us.

‘ The shock I felt on the first intelligence of this sad catastrophe is inconceivable, and would doubtless have made a lasting impression on me, if the progress I every day made in my courtship to the object of my virtuous affection, — the gaining her consent to be mine,—our marriage, and the hurry of pleasures attending that solemnity, had not too much taken up my heart to leave room for any other sensations than those of joy and transport.

‘ Events once obliterated from the mind, by others of greater consequence to our happiness, seldom or never recur to it again :—a long succession of years pass’d over without any remembrance of the unfortunate Harriot ; and it is but very lately that the thoughts of her have begun to trouble my repose.

‘ But Heaven would not suffer me to be always dead to a just sensibility of the crime I had been guilty of.— Not many nights ago, whether sleeping or awake I cannot pretend to be positive, I saw, at least I thought I saw, that injur’d woman stand by my bed-side :—I heard her too, with a voice hollow, yet sonorous as an echo, bid me repent, and atone for my past transgression.— ‘ How shall I atone ? ’ cry’d I. — Devote to heaven the dearest thing you have

‘on earth,’ reply’d the phantom, and in that instant vanish’d from my sight.

‘It is not possible for me to express, much less for you to conceive, the horrors I sustained after this amazing dream, or apparition, I know not which to call it; but am since convinced it was no other than my guardian angel, who, under the form of Harriot, instructed me how to atone for my crime: — and should I neglect or disobey his admonition, it would more than double my transgression, and sink my soul down to the lowest hell.—‘Devote to heaven the dearest thing thou hast on earth,’ the vision said. — Now what have I on earth that is truly dear to me, except your brother and yourself? — I have examin’d well my heart, and find that of the two you sit nearer there; it is you therefore, my Isabinda, that are ordained to be the sacrifice; — and, like faithful Abraham, I must submit to lay my darling on the altar.’

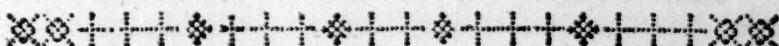
Isabinda. ‘Oh, sir, you will not kill me! ’

Flaminio. ‘Kill thee, my child! rather would I suffer this flesh of mine to be torn with burning pincers, — every limb dislocated, — my breast laid open, and my panting heart exposed to public view, than hurt the smallest part of thy dear precious frame: — no, — I mean to present thee a living sacrifice on the altar of piety: — to consecrate thee to the service of heaven, and to make thee, while on earth, a companion for the saints above: — in fine, my Isabinda, you must be a nun.’

Isabinda. ‘A nun,—oh heavens! ’—

This poor young lady seem’d no less terrified with the word Nun than she had been with that of Sacrifice. — but all I can say is, not all the obedience Isabinda had hitherto been practised in, nor all her father’s

father's authority, nor the arguments he urged, could either reconcile her to the way of life he enjoin'd, or oblige her to submit to it with any degree of willingness ; and her tears and intreaties being equally in vain to make him recede from the resolution he had taken, he dismiss'd her from his presence, telling her, in a very angry tone, that he had now done with persuasions, and should take measures to bring her to her duty, more becoming his character as a father.



C H A P. III.

The author finds, tho' with an infinite deal of difficulty, to make a discovery of some part of the unhappy consequences which immediately attended the cruel resolution Flaminio had taken in regard to his daughter.

I HAD never yet attempted to see how Lysimor brook'd the late delays which had been given to his intended nuptials, so now took it into my head to go : — a servant, who was carrying out a wig-box, gave me an opportunity of slipping into the house. — I found the old gentleman with a letter in his hand, which seem'd to excite in him very great emotions ; — but as he had just finish'd the perusal as I enter'd the room, and was putting it into his pocket, I could not possibly know any thing of the contents : I was not, however, long unsatisfied : — Lysimor was return'd from a morning-walk he had been taking, and enter'd a few moments after : — he appear'd in little better humour than his father, and, when he had paid the usual salutation, spoke in this manner :

Lysimor. ‘ Certainly, sir, something very extraordinary must have happen'd to occasion this sudden change both in Flaminio and his daughter :---I have been to enquire of her health this morning, after being disappointed of seeing her last night, and have a second time been deny'd access.’

Father. ‘ I could have told you that, if I had known you had been there ;---I have just receiv'd a letter from Flaminio ;---see what the old coxcomb writes.’

With these words he drew the letter he had been reading from his pocket, and threw it on a table ;---Lysimor snatch'd it up with the greatest eagerness, and found the contents as follow :

‘ SIR,
 ‘ AN over-ruling fate deprives me of the honour of your alliance, and disposes of my daughter in a different manner from what I once intended ;---I must therefore intreat your son will make no future visits at my house, nor take any steps to traverse those designs which I am oblig'd to pursue in relation to Isabinda.---As for yourself, sir, I hope you'll impute this alteration in my conduct to what it really is,---an unavoidable necessity, and not to want of respect in him, who in all things else would readily subscribe himself, Sir,
 ‘ Your most obedient servant,
 ‘ FLAMINIO.’

Surprise and resentment now seemed to strive which should be most predominant in the countenance of Lysimor :---he stampt, ---bit his lips, ---paused a while, then spoke.

Lysimor.

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Lysimor. ‘ This must be madness ;---no man in his senses could possibly act thus.---What !---after expressing the highest satisfaction in the intended union between our families, --- after the warmest professions of respect to you, sir, and of love to me, to affront both in so gross a manner, without the least cause given on our part ! --- ’tis unaccountable, --- ’tis monstrous ;---but I cannot think Isabinda shares in her father’s frenzy.’

Father. ‘ Whatever she does, it behoves you not to think on her at all :---sooner would I have my family extinct, and my name perish to eternity, than have a branch of that stem grafted on a tree of mine ;---and I should be sorry to find you mean-spirited enough to retain a wish that way.’

What reply Lysimor would have made I know not, for the old gentleman was call’d hastily out of the parlour to one who waited for him in another room. --- Lysimor, when alone, fell into a deep musing,---in which he sigh’d and frown’d alternately, and seem’d divided between love and resentment ;---but whatever his thoughts were, he had no opportunity of indulging them :---a servant presented him with a letter, which he said was brought by a porter, who desired it might be given into his own hands, and waited for an answer. Lysimor no sooner saw the character on the superscription, than the late paleness in his cheeks was converted into the most lively red ; he broke the seal with trembling impatience, and found it contain’d these lines :

‘ DEAR SIR,
‘ MY father, in an unaccountable caprice,
‘ tears me from your arms, and is resolved to
‘ make

make me a nun, or rather a martyr of me. —
Prayers and tears are ineffectual to move him
from his purpose; — I have tried both in vain,
and it is by flight alone I can avoid a fate more
dreadful to me than all I can suffer by abandon-
ing his protection: — if you have compassion, —
I must not now say love, — assist me in my
escape. — I have made no intimacies, — have no
confidantes on whom I dare rely in this distracting
exigence, and there remain not four and twenty
hours between me and the impossibility of avert-
ing the doom that threatens me: — I am at pre-
sent a close prisoner in my chamber, and to-
morrow, early in the morning, am to take coach
for Dover, thence to embark for Dunkirk, under
the care of a person whose vigilance I cannot
hope to elude, and who is not to quit my sight
one moment, till I am, beyond redemption,
lodged within the walls of a convent. — A girl
lately taken into the house, pitying my distress,
has promised to get this conveyed to you, and
also to grease the hinges of the street-door, that
I may go out with less noise when the family are
all in bed, which I believe will be pretty early,
as my father is too much out of humour to see
any company: — if you will take upon you the
trouble to wait for me at the end of our street,
next the square, between the hours of twelve and
one, and conduct me to some place where I may
be secreted till the search, which doubtless will be
made after me, is over, I shall endeavour to earn
a subsistence by such ways as I am capable of,
and fortune shall present. — If you ever truly
loved me, you will not think this request too
presuming, but rather be sorry for the sad acci-
dent that compels me to make it. — I beg a line,
in answer to this, may inform me what I have to
depend

depend upon from your good-nature, and what
hope remains for the forlorn and most wretched
‘ ISABINDA.’

The lover appear'd extremely touch'd with this melancholy epistle; and when he had finish'd, threw his arms across his breast, and cry'd out,
 ‘ Poor Isabinda, --- what dæmon has taken posseſſion of her father's brain! --- but I should be even yet more cruel to refuse the assistance ſhe implores. --- No, --- love, honour, and generosity forbid it! --- whatever shall be the conſequence, I must, --- I will defend her from the fate ſhe dreads.’ --- He then call'd his footman, and bid him order the person who had brought this letter to wait for an answer at ſome diſtance from the house, leſt his father ſhould happen to ſee him, and be inquisitive from whom, and on what buſineſs he came. Having given these instructions, he ran haſtily up into his chamber, where I follow'd, and ſaw him ſit down to his bureau, and write in these terms :

To ISABINDA.

‘ My for ever dear ISABINDA,
 ‘ WHATEVER are my ſufferings in this unexpected turn of our affairs, I cannot be wholly unhappy while I know you have had no part in the inflicting them. --- Why do you unkindly make that a request, which you ought to be convinced you might command from my affection? --- I have devoted myſelf entirely to your ſervice; and no change of circumſtances can ever make me withdraw a heart attracted by ſo much beauty, and confirm'd in its choice by ſo much merit. --- Yes, my charming Isabinda, I am unalterably yours; and you may depend upon my love and honour for every thing you ei-

‘ ther do, or shall hereafter stand in need of:—
 ‘ I shall employ this day in procuring a proper
 ‘ place for your reception; and shall anticipate the
 ‘ hours you mention to watch for your enlarge-
 ‘ ment, which I pray heaven to facilitate, and
 ‘ bring you safe to the arms of, my dear Isabinda,
 ‘ your faithful and most constant

‘ LYSIMOR.’

He had but just dispatched this when his father came into the room, and with a voice and air vastly different from what he had a few minutes before assumed, spoke to him in these terms :

Father. ‘ I believe, son, I have interrupted your dressing ; — but no matter, — I bring you news to console you for the loss of your late mistress ; —my old friend, Mr. Countwell, the banker, has been with me : — his fair charge, Emilia, comes to town next week, and he has offered, for a small premium, to make up a match between you ; —he assures me she is a most lovely young creature, is entirely independent of any one, and has twenty thousand pounds in her pocket, which is more than double the fortune you would have had with the daughter of that fool Flaminio.’

Lysimor. ‘ I am greatly indebted to your goodness, sir, and to the consideration Mr. Countwell has of me ; but, sir, you know I have long lov’d Isabinda, and you must give my heart some time to wean itself from its former attachment.’

Father. ‘ Pshaw, one woman, like one nail, will drive out the thoughts of another ; —your heart must be strangely stupified, if it does not dance to the music of twenty thousand pounds : remember, son, the estate you are to enjoy at my decease does not amount to quite sixteen hundred

‘ hundred pounds per annum ; and that I have
been obliged to mortgage some part of it, to dis-
charge the debts your extravagant elder brother
contracted before he died : — Emilia’s fortune
will retrieve all.—Well, the breaking off your
match with Isabinda is the most lucky thing that
could have happened.’

Lysimor. ‘ But, sir, we cannot be sure the young
lady will approve my suit.’

Father. ‘ Mr. Countwell will manage that ; he
is a shrewd man, he knows what he does, and
will undertake nothing without performing it :
—you have only to say a few fine things to
Emilia, which you know well enough how to do,
when once you get Isabinda out of your head.’

Lysimor. ‘ Sir, I shall use my best endeavours
to obey you in every thing.’

Father. ‘ That is well said : — I want no obe-
dience but what is for your own interest, and
will leave you to reflect how many charms there-
are in twenty thousand pounds ; and then you
will fall in love with the fortune, whether ever
you do so with the lady or not.’

This conversation being ended, I recollect ed
that I had some affairs of my own to dispatch, and
began to think of retiring ; but was prevented by
Lysimor, who walking in a continued and very
hasty motion about the room, obliged me to keep
close in the corner where I had placed myself, and
not venture to stir lest he should rush against me.
—At first I was a little vexed at this confinement ;
but afterwards rejoiced heartily at it, as it gave
me an opportunity of making a discovery, which
otherwise, perhaps, I should have found much
more difficult to attain.

Lysimor, after ruminating for a consider able
time, rung the bell for his footman, who, on his

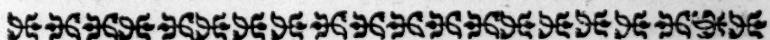
entrance, received for his first command to shut the door: --- that done, he made no scruple to inform the fellow, who I soon found was in all his secrets, of the concern he was in for Isabinda; the promise he had given of taking her under his protection; and the vexation he was in to find a proper lodging for her, so that his father might not suspect he had any hand in her escape, nor her own be able to discover where she was concealed.

To this the man, after a pretty long pause, replied,---that he had a sister who was a widow, and lived in a very remote and obscure part of the town; --- that her house was clean, tho' small; --- that her family consisted only of herself, an infant sucking at her breast, and a country girl who did the business of a servant; ---and added, that if the lady could content herself with so mean an abode, he was certain she might remain there concealed as long as she should think fit.

Lysimor seem'd overjoy'd at this proposal, and bid him go directly to his sister, apprise her of the affair as far as it was necessary, and give her a strict charge to prepare every thing in as decent a manner as she could for the reception of her fair guest. The fellow went to execute his commission, and I slid softly round the room till I got to the door and follow'd him, but not to the place where he was going; for having already found, by the discourse he had with his master, the name and situation of the street, I had no business to take so long a walk, till something more material excited my curiosity.

Lysimor himself, however, was not more punctual to the time appointed by Isabinda than I was to

to know the issue of this adventure : it wanted some minutes of twelve when I arrived at the corner of the square, and had but just posted myself under a lamp, when I saw Lysimor come muffled up in his cloak, and attended by his servant. We had not waited above a quarter of an hour before we saw Isabinda steal out of her father's house, with a bundle under her arm almost as big as herself : — Lysimor, perceiving how she was loaded, made his man hasten to ease her of it ; after which she rather flew than ran into the arms of her deliverer ; for so she called him, — adding, — ‘ Oh can you “ pardon the trouble I have given you ? ” — To which he replied, — ‘ Call not that a trouble “ which I shall always look upon as the greatest “ happiness of my life.’ I could hear distinctly little more of what they said to each other, the footman being between us : — they walk'd very fast through the square, and down a street which turn'd from it, where a hackney-coach waited to receive them, and as soon as they were entered, drove away with all imaginable speed : — I had neither the will nor the power to pursue them, so return'd home to reflect at leisure on the passages I had been witness of.



C H A P. IV.

Contains some more interesting particulars of this adventure, and shews that people by flying from one thing which they think would be a misfortune, often run into others of a nature more to be dreaded.

MUCH as I had condemn'd Flaminio for his bigoted superstition, I could not wholly absolve Isabinda for the step she had taken ; I won-

der'd not that she was fearful of being forced into a state of life which few ladies of her years would chuse; --- but I wonder'd that she was not also fearful of putting herself into the power of a man who loved her, and whom she passionately loved: --- she must certainly either not have considered the dangers to which she might be exposed, or have depended too much on the strength of her own virtue. Besides, she could not be so ignorant as not to know that no woman can be made a nun, any more than she can be made a wife, against her will; and a less share of courage than she shewed in this midnight elopement, would have enabled her, on her entrance within the walls of the convent, to declare she had neither call nor inclination to receive the veil; on which neither the abbess nor the bishop of the diocese could have consented to her admission into holy orders. It is true, that her father might have confined her there a pensioner as long as he thought fit; but as this would not have answer'd his end in devoting her to the service of the church, by way of propitiation for his offences, there is no doubt to be made but that he would shortly have recalled her home;—and, perhaps too, been convinced of his folly in attempting a thing so absurd in itself, as well as cruel to his daughter.

I am sensible, that many of my fair young readers will be apt to quarrel with me for my animadversions on Isabinda's conduct in this point, and cry out, — if they were in her place they would do the same: — it is very likely, indeed, that they would do so, and full as likely that they would meet with something to make them heartily repent of their inadvertency. There are others again, who will say, — that they can have no compassion for whatever misfortunes may beset a girl who thus rashly

rashly throws herself under the protection of a man not akin to her; but I believe the number of those who are so hard-hearted will be very few, except some profest prudes, who exclaim violently against the least misconduct in public, yet make no scruple of giving themselves the greatest loose in private.

But to return to the melancholy detail I am now upon:—Having little to do with my time the next morning, I went to the house where I knew Isabinda was placed for shelter from her father's power; —I gain'd an easy access, the door being open, as is generally the custom in mean houses:—on my going up stairs, I found the unhappy beauty sitting in a very pensive posture, leaning her head against the corner of a cupboard, which I suppose served her for a larder; for I saw a small slice of butter and the remains of a halfpenny roll lying: frequent sighs issued from her breast, and some tears fell.—Strange indeed would it have been, if a young lady, bred up in all the delicacies of life, could have worn a cheerful countenance in such a change of situation;—though, as the fellow had told his master, the room and all the furniture it contained was extremely clean, and shewed the housewifery of the owner; yet nothing could have more the face of poverty.

She seemed buried, as it were, in a profound contemplation, when the sound of somebody coming up the stairs, made her raise her head a little, probably guessing from whom it proceeded.—Lysimor presently appeared, and, on sight of him, a dawn of joy overspread her face: — he ran to her, embraced her, and said the most tender things, intermixed with some expressions of concern, that the necessity of her being concealed, left him not the power of providing a place for her more suitable

able to her merit and his affection ; --- she could not now restrain her tears from flowing, which occasion'd the following discourse :

Ifabinda. ‘ Ah, Lysimor, I beg you will not talk to me in this manner ; but rather use all your rhetoric to assist my weak endeavours to suit my humour to my condition : — to be easy, I must forget what I have been, and wish to be no more than what I am.’

Lysimor. ‘ You never can be other than the most charming and most worthy of your sex.’

Ifabinda. ‘ Alas, I have no longer any pretence to compliments like these ; — I have now, as the poet says,

No name, no family to call my own,
But am an out-cast, and a vagabond.

‘ As such I must hereafter live ; — and that I may lose all remembrance of my former state, I have brought away my jewels and best apparel, for no other end than to dispose of them, and purchase others more conformable to my future circumstances.’

Lysimor. ‘ Torture not thus a heart to which you are dearer than the vital blood that gives it motion. --- Can you believe I would suffer you to part with any of those appendixes to your birth and rank ? --- No, --- I would rather add to them. Do you not know that my whole fortune is at your devotion ?’

Ifabinda. ‘ I must not, Sir, accept it.’

Lysimor. ‘ Why not accept it, too scrupulous Ifabinda ? --- But if you are above receiving the tribute of a lover, command whatever you may have occasion for on the score of a brother ; --- my dear Adario, I know, will readily discharge the obligation.’

Ifabinda.

Isabinda. ‘ I am sure he will ; and on that condition, if Providence presents no other way for my support, I will not refuse your generous offer.’

Lysimor. ‘ Think then no more of submitting to any thing unworthy of your character ; — I flatter myself our misfortunes are not of long continuance ; — that your father will repent him of his cruel resolution, and mine forget the affront offer’d to his family, and we may yet be happy.’

Isabinda. ‘ I dare not entertain a hope so distant.’

Lysimor. ‘ You know not how prophetic my passion may prove ; — in the mean time I should be glad, methinks, to be made acquainted with the motive that has caused this sudden revolution in our fate.’

Isabinda. ‘ Tho’ I am loth to expose the secrets, I might say the follies of a father,---yet I cannot refuse you.’

Perceiving now that she was preparing herself to make a detail of those particulars I had heard before, and in a preceding chapter have communicated to the reader, I would not stay to hear a second repetition, but came away, and left the lovers together for that time. From thence I went to the house of Flaminio, where I found, as I expected, every thing in distraction ; — messengers running backwards and forwards, — some returning from their fruitless search of Isabinda,—others going to places where they had not before been sent ; ---and the old gentleman himself so overcome with rage and grief, that he was scarce capable of giving the necessary orders for what he most desired.

Some other adventures, which I shall hereafter publish, then falling in my way, I had no leisure to make a second visit to Isabinda for the space of

near

near three weeks ;—but how shall I express my concern for that unfortunate young lady, when on my going thither, I found her in the manner I did ; and that all the apprehensions I had been in on her account had but too solid a foundation ? When wild desire presides over the heart of man, what is his boasted honour ? —what his virtue ? —what his regard for the happiness and reputation of the woman he pretends to love ? —All shadowy nothings—vain ideas, which, like the Sybil's words wrote on the leaves of trees, are blown off and scatter'd through the air with every gust of passion. But to proceed :

No obstruction being in my way, I pass'd directly up to Isabinda's chamber ; but finding the door fast lock'd, began to imagine she was either removed, or had ventured out to take the air, and was going down again, when I was prevented by the murmuring sound of persons talking within.—I then put my ear close to the key-hole, and easily knew the voices to be those of Lysimor and Isabinda ; on which I resolved to wait till the door should be opened, and in about three or four minutes after the woman of the house came up with two dishes of chocolate and some biscuits on a plate ;—she had the key in her pocket, and immediately gave entrance to me as well as herself. It was now more than past mid-day, yet Isabinda had not left her bed ;—Lysimor was sitting on the side of it as lately risen, having both his feet on a chair, without either shoes or slippers :—I was a little surprised at seeing him in this posture, till the chocolate being served, he said to the woman,

Lysimor. ‘ Has Jeffery prepared my boots, as I directed last night ? ’

Woman.

Woman. ‘ Yes, an please your honour — he has so besplash’d them, and made the horse’s heels so dirty, that one would swear they had come a journey of twenty miles this morning.’

Lysimor. ‘ That’s right, it would have been ridiculous, after telling my father that I was gone a hunting, to have come home as clean as out of a lady’s bed-chamber: — but go, and bid Jeffery bring the boots.’

Lysimor spoke this with a very gay air; but Isabinda hung down her head, and on the fellow’s coming in, hid her face behind the curtain, nor uttered a syllable while he was in the room, which was no longer than to equip his master for departure. Lysimor was no sooner ready, and his servant withdrawn, than he approached the bed, and began to take his leave of Isabinda with a very tender embrace, accompanied with some soft words: — she made no other reply for a considerable time than returning his caresses; but at last broke out into these expressions:

Isabinda. ‘ Ah, Lysimor, should you forget your vows, despise the conquest you have gain’d, and leave me to lament my easy faith, how miserable, how abandoned beyond the power of words to express, would be the condition of your Isabinda !’

Lysimor. ‘ Unkind and causeless apprehension ! — My dearest love, let not the thoughts of such impossibilities disturb you. — Could I be ungrateful, after being made happy in this proof of your affection, I must be lost to all sense of honour, — unworthy of the name of man, and even to breathe the vital air.’

Isabinda.

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Isabinda. ‘ Well then,— I must, I will believe
 ‘ you,— nor repent what I have done ; — but
 ‘ tell me when you will come again.’

Lysimor. ‘ To-morrow, if I can ; — if not,
 ‘ you may depend on seeing me next day ; — be
 ‘ assured that every hour will seem an age to me
 ‘ till I see you : farewell, thou softest, loveliest of
 ‘ thy sex.’

He went, but, as I then fancy’d, with more the air of triumph than of real tenderness or respect in his deportment :—Isabinda then called for the woman of the house to assist her in rising, and I left the place with a heart full of forebodings for her future fate ; indeed I truly pitied the ruined maid, and wished she never might have occasion to cry out with Monilia in the tragedy :

————— How often has he sworn
 ‘ Nature should change, the sun and stars grow dark,
 ‘ E’er he would falsify his vows to me ?
 ‘ Make haste, Confusion, then ; — Sun, lose thy light,
 ‘ And Stars, drop down with sorrow to the earth,
 ‘ For he is false ;
 ‘ False as the winds, the water, or the weather ;
 ‘ Cruel as tygers o’er their trembling prey :
 ‘ I feel him in my breast, — he tears my heart,
 ‘ And at each sigh he drinks the gushing blood.’

My curiosity having received this painful satisfaction, I imagined not that any farther discoveries, at least that would be material enough to compensate for the trouble I should take, could be made in relation to these lovers, and therefore thought of returning no more, either to the apartment of Isabinda, or to the house of Lysimor. I should, indeed, have endeavoured to lose all memory of this unhappy transaction, if the talk of the town had not continually reminded me of it :—every one

was

was full of Isabinda's flight;—few, if any besides myself, were acquainted with the motive of it; and none knew to what place she was retired:—and the perfect ignorance people were in on both these scores occasioned various conjectures, and rendered the wonder much more lasting than otherwise it would have been.

But this was not all:—Flaminio, pierced thro' with grief and indignation on not being able to find his daughter, and perhaps too with some mixture of remorse for the cause he had given her to leave him, fell into a violent fever, of which he died, after languishing some days. By his last testament he bequeathed to his daughter, if ever she should be found, the sum of three thousand pounds, in order, as he caused it to be express'd in the writing, to keep her above the contempt of the world; and likewise, by the smallness of the portion, to keep her in perpetual remembrance of the false step she had taken.

Soon after this I received certain intelligence, that Lysimor was making his public addresses to a fine young lady with a very large fortune: — I doubted not but this was that same Emilia whom I had heard his father so strongly recommend, and was fired with the utmost impatience to see how poor Isabinda would behave on both these events: accordingly, I went once more to the house where she had been concealed; but, to my great disappointment, found she was gone from thence; nor could all my search, joined with the assistance of my Invisible Belt, enable me, for some time, to discover to what part of the town or country she was removed.

C H A P.

C H A P. V.

Completes the catastrophe of this truly tragical adventure.

A DARIO had proceeded on his travels no farther than Paris, when the account of his father's death obliged him to return to England with all possible expedition: — soon after his coming I made an unseen visit at his house, where I found him, not like most young heirs, exulting in being the entire master of himself and fortune, and contriving in what kind of luxuries he should dispose of both, but full of the most sincere and unaffected sorrow.— He was, indeed, one of those few sons who look on the possession of an estate as no equivalent for the loss of a good parent, such as Flaminio ever had been to both his children, 'till that fatal caprice, which drove his daughter from his protection, had brought on her undoing, his own death, and was the source of other calamities of a yet more dreadful nature, as will presently appear.

The story of Isabinda's elopement, and the uncertainty what fate had since attended her, was a matter of great affliction to this young gentleman.— He loved his sister with a very tender affection, and had hoped to have seen her by this time married to Lysimor; but as his esteem for that friend was no way lessened by the match being broke off, and, besides, expecting to be better informed by him of the particulars of that affair, than he could be by any other person, he was impatient to see him, and I found had sent him that morning notice of his arrival; for a letter, in answer to his message,

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message, was delivered to him while I was there, the contents whereof were these :

To ADARIO.

‘ SIR,

‘ I Congratulate your safe return to England, and should gladly have paid my compliments to you in person, if that honour had not been prohibited by an authority, which I must not presume to contend with.—My father, resenting the affront given by yours, which you cannot but have been informed of, has forbid me, under the penalty of his eternal displeasure, to converse with any of your family :—he was at home when your servant came, and heard the message you sent deliver’d to me; on which he repeated his former injunction, and exacted a solemn oath of my obedience to it :—you will therefore pardon my not waiting on you, and believe that the discontinuance of our acquaintance will always be extremely regretted by him who is, with all due respect, Sir,

‘ Your most obedient servant,

‘ LYSIMOR.’

‘ Alas,’ cried Adario, throwing the letter from him as soon as he had read it, ‘ how cold, how distant is the air of this letter!—how different from those I have been accustom’d to receive from Lysimor!—I find that by one unlucky accident I have at once lost a father, a sister, and a friend.’

I thought I had now entirely done with this family; for as Isabinda was not to be found, I expected nothing of consequence could be learn’d either

either at the house of Lysimor or Adario, so intended to make no more visits to those gentlemen,—chance, however, about five months afterwards, changed my resolution, and threw something in my way which no diligence of my own could ever have attain'd.—As I was going one morning on my Invisible Progression, I happen'd to pass by the house of Adario;—he was at the door, and about to step into a hackney-coach which waited for him, when a fellow, who had the appearance of a groom, came running towards him, almost breathless with the haste he had made, and cry'd out,—
 ‘ Oh, Sir, I have joyful news for you;—I beg
 ‘ your honour will turn back and hear it.’—These words reviv'd my former curiosity, and finding Adario comply'd with his servant's request, I follow'd them into the parlour, and was witness of the ensuing discourse:

Groom. ‘ Oh, Sir, I have seen my young lady.’

Adario. ‘ What young lady?—Not my sister!’

Groom. ‘ Yes, indeed Sir,—as I was going to
 ‘ fetch a horse your honour sent me for, I saw
 ‘ madam Isabinda looking through the window of
 ‘ a house at the corner of a little lane just by
 ‘ Islington.’

Adario. ‘ Are you sure it was she?’

Groom. ‘ As sure as I am alive, Sir; tho', poor
 ‘ lady, she is much alter'd, very thin and pale.’

Adario. ‘ I fancy you are mistaken; if my sister
 ‘ were so near London, she would certainly either
 ‘ have sent or come to claim the legacy left her
 ‘ by her father, which I suppose she has need
 ‘ enough of by this time;—I am resolved to
 ‘ be convinced notwithstanding. Do you think
 ‘ she lodges there?’

Groom. ‘ Yes, Sir, for she was all undress'd,
 ‘ and look'd as if she was just out of bed.’

Adario.

Adario. ‘ And can you know the house again ? ’

Groom. ‘ O yes, Sir,— I took particular notice of it.’

Adario. ‘ Well, then,— I will only send an excuse to the gentleman I was to meet this morning, and go directly: you shall get upon the coach-box and order the fellow where to drive; but let him stop short of the house, that my sister, if it be she, may not be apprised of my coming before she sees me.’

While Adario was calling one of his footmen to send on the message he had mention’d, I ran to the end of the street, went into a narrow dark passage, and pluck’d off my Belt; — then, having recover’d the appearance of what I am, a real substance, I popt into an empty coach that had just set down a fare, and bid the driver to follow wherever that went which was standing at Adario’s door.— Both the coaches drove with such speed that we soon reach’d the end of our little journey; — I quitted my vehicle the moment I saw the other preparing to stop; but tho’ I made all imaginable haste to put on my Belt, I could scarce have regain’d my Invisibility time enough to have entered with Adario, if he had not met with an obstruction in his passage from the woman of the house, who at first deny’d she had any lady lodged with her; — then said, she had none of the name he enquired for; — on which he reply’d with some heat, — that the lady might have reasons for concealing her real name; — ‘ But tell her, cry’d he, that mine is Adario; — that I am her brother, and must needs see her.’ On this she seem’d somewhat more compliable, and said she would go and acquaint the lady: — accordingly she went up stairs; but Adario was too impatient to wait her return, and follow’d her directly; — I was but one step behind him,

him, and we were both in the room before she could deliver any part of her message.

Isabinda was adjusting something about her dress before a looking-glass, but happening to turn her head just as Adario was within the door, shriek'd out, ' Oh heavens, my brother ! ' and with these words fell back in her chair. The woman went to fetch some water, Adario ran to support the fainting fair ; but happening to cast his eyes on the table, saw a letter lying there, the superscription of which was in Isabinda's hand, and addressed to Lysimor : — emotions more strong than pity at this time made him quit his sister to examine the contents of this surprising billet, which were these :

' My dear, dear LYSIMOR,

' FOR such you are, and ever must be to my fond doating heart ; tho' I have too much caule to fear the tender epithet is now no longer pleasing to you. — Ah, Lysimor, how sad is the reverse of my condition ! — From seeing you twice or thrice every week, I now see you not once a month ; — and even then how cold is your behaviour ! — how short your visits ! — How cruel is this to one who neither can, nor wishes to enjoy any conversation but yours ! — For pity's sake, if not for love, render my life more easy, at least for the present, whatever you do hereafter : — the infant I carry within me sympathises in it's mother's anguish, and continually upbraids you with convulsive heavings : — even if your vows of everlasting constancy should be forgot, let some consideration of the unborn innocent, the pledge of your once mutual loves, oblige you to treat with less indifference its unhappy mother,

' The ruin'd ISABINDA.

' P. S.

‘ P. S. I can no longer bear your absence, else would not have troubled you with this complaint.’

What a letter was this to fall into a brother’s hands! — Never did I see a man in such distraction.— ‘ Villain, — villain, Lysimor! — wretched Isabinda! ’ cried he out; — then turning towards her, — ‘ but there needed not this proof in thy own hand, added he; thy shame is but too visible.’ Isabinda, who by the assistance of the woman was now recovered from her swoon, but not enough to hear what her brother said, threw herself at his feet, and with streaming eyes addressed him in these terms:

Isabinda. ‘ Oh, sir, can you forgive my concealing myself from you?’

Adario. ‘ Would to God that there were equal reason to forgive the cause!’

Isabinda, (at this instant turning up her eyes, beheld her letter in his hand, and cried out with the greatest vehemence,) ‘ I am now undone, indeed,—irrecoverably lost to all hope of pardon or of pity! — my shame exposed to him from whom of all the world it should have most been hid.’

Adario. ‘ Rise, sister, and cease these unavailing exclamations; — your shame will receive no addition by my knowledge of it; — rather, perhaps, be remedied.—But tell, and tell me truly, has Lysimor ever promised marriage to you?’

Isabinda. ‘ A thousand and a thousand times, and bound himself to the performance by the most solemn imprecations.’

Adario. ‘ Then he is doubly a villain; and if you believe him, you are doubly deceived; he courts another woman.’

Isabinda. ‘Indeed, of late, I have suspected
‘this, and often accused him of it;—and he as
‘often has forsworn it.’

Adario. ‘Mere words of course: but say, —
‘have you no testimony under his own hand of
‘the promise he made you, either by letter or by
‘formal obligations?’

Isabinda. ‘None,—none, alas!’

On this Adario bit his lips, — walk’d two or three times about the room, then paused, and seemed as if debating within himself in what manner he should behave; at last sat down, and taking the still-weeping Isabinda by the hand, endeavoured to assuage her grief.

Adario. ‘Come, Isabinda, dry your tears; love and credulity have seduced your innocence; great has been your fault: but yet I cannot forget you are my sister, and that you have no friend but me on whom you can depend for consolation:—what is passed cannot be recalled, but it may be redres’d:—be assured you shall one way or other have justice.’

Isabinda. ‘Ah, sir, I beseech you, proceed not to extremities:—if by my crime you should be involved in any danger or perplexities, it would sink me quite.’

Adario. ‘I hope there will be no occasion: Lysimor was once a man of honour, and may yet return to his first principles:—on this you may rely, that I shall do nothing rashly nor inconsistent with your interest and reputation.’

After this they fell into some discourse concerning the strange resolution Flaminio had taken of sending her to a monastery; the particulars of which the reader being already acquainted with, I shall

shall pass over in silence. When Adario took his leave, he did it with a great deal of affection; but I was much divided in my thoughts, whether I should stay with Isabinda, or follow Adario home: —the latter seem'd most flattering to my curiosity, as by many tokens I perceived he had something in his head, which he was impatient to put in execution. I was not deceived in my conjectures: Adario was no sooner in his own house, than he flew to his bureau, and without taking any time for deliberation, wrote this epistle to Lysimor:

• SIR,

• CONSCIOUS guilt, without those commands you seem so zealous in observing, might well make you avoid the presence of a person you have so greatly injured: — when I recommended you to my sister, it was in order to become her protector, not her undoer. How cruelly you have abused this confidence, let your own heart remind you: but I have some hope, how much soever appearances at present are to the contrary, you still intend to do justice to your promises to Isabinda, and the claim she has to your affection: I need not tell you, that you can repair the misfortune you have brought upon her no otherwise than by an honourable marriage: I am ready to fulfil the agreement made between our fathers on that score, and give my sister the sum of eight thousand pounds, as was then stipulated.—If you comply with this proposal, I shall be glad to see you at her lodgings, there to settle every thing; —if not, shall expect you will meet me in another place, and give me the satisfaction which every gentleman has a right to demand when he finds himself ill used: — I attend your determination, and am, &c.

• ADARIO.

G 2

He

He sent this by one of his servants, with a charge to give it into Lysimor's own hands, and wait his answer : — after which, being told dinner was ready, he went down and placed himself at the table, though I believe with very little appetite ; — for his countenance had upon it all the marks of the greatest inward disturbance, which was not at all lessened when his man returned with this from Lysimor :

‘ SIR,

‘ SINCE I find you are so well acquainted with a secret, which, for the lady's sake, I could wish had been inviolably kept, I think myself obliged to deal sincerely with you on the occasion ; you may be assured I can behave to no woman, much less your sister, otherwise than becomes a man of honour ; but marriage is a thing quite out of the question, as I am certain my father never would consent to it : — if any promises on that account ever escaped my lips, I remember nothing of them, and could make them with no other view than to give her modesty an excuse for yielding : I am sorry, however, for what has happened ; but you cannot be insensible of the frailties of flesh and blood, and must know, as well as I, that when two young people, who like each other, are much alone together, such accidents will naturally occur. The resentment you threaten, on my non-compliance with your proposal, appears therefore to me a little unreasonable : I shall, notwithstanding, be ready to give you the satisfaction you desire, at any time or place you shall appoint.

‘ Yours, &c.

‘ LYSIMOR.
All

All the blood now seemed to have forsook the heart of Adario to rush into his face; his lips trembled, his very eye-balls started with excess of passion; he hesitated not a moment what he should do, but in this tempest of his mind wrote as follows to Lysimor :

‘ SIR,

‘ I WANT words to return the insolence and ingratitude of your reply; but have a sword at your service, which I expect you will try the metal of to-morrow morning about seven, in the field behind Montague-house:—as the dispute between us will admit of no witnesses, pray come alone to

ADARIO.’

Tho’ I knew my own dinner waited for me, I could not prevail on myself to go home till Adario had dispatched this billet to Lysimor, and the servant who carried it was come back from that gentleman with a small slip of paper tied up, containing only these words :

‘ SIR,

‘ YOU may depend that I shall not fail to meet you as desired.

LYSIMOR.’

I now quitted the house of Adario; but after having related the pains I had already taken, I believe nobody will suppose I neglected going the next morning to the field, to see the issue of this combat: I found Adario was there first; but tho’ he waited only a very few minutes for Lysimor, his impatience made him not forbear saluting him in this manner.

Adario. ‘ I began to think, Lysimor, that the shame of having done a base action would not suffer you to defend it.’

Lysimor. ‘ Sir, whatever I dare do, I always
dare defend.’

Adario. ‘ Then, sir, this is no time for words.’

Lysimor. ‘ I am ready for you, sir.’

Here ceased all farther speech between them, and on the part of Lysimor for ever;—on the second push Adario ran him quite thro’ the body:—he fell that instant, and expired with only a single groan:—his successful antagonist approached the body, and finding life was totally extinguish’d, gave a sigh or two to the memory of a man he once had call’d his friend, then made the best of his way home, in order to provide for his own security, which the likelihood there was of the challenge he had sent to the deceased being found, rendered highly necessary.

The measures he took, indeed, were very prudent:—he sent immediately to hire a post-chaise, which was to wait for him in a street he mention’d, at some distance from that in which he lived;—carry’d no baggage with him, but order’d a servant to follow him with it to Calais;—staid no longer at his own house than to write two short letters,—the one to a gentleman who had been one of the executors of his father’s will, which being only on family affairs, need not here be inserted;—the other was to his sister Isabinda, and contained these lines:

‘ SISTER,

‘ FAILING to repair your wrongs by the
way I hoped, I have revenged them by the death
of your seducer, for which I am obliged this
moment to leave my native country, perhaps for
ever: — I have done what the honour of our
family exacted from me: — it belongs to you to
regulate

‘ regulate your future conduct so as to atone, in some measure, for the errors of the past : — to enable you to do this, you ought to keep in eternal remembrance, that the follies of your fatal passion have not only brought the object of it to an untimely grave, but also drove from all the social joys of life, into an irksome banishment in a foreign land, him who might have been happy, if he had not been your brother.

‘ ADARIO.’

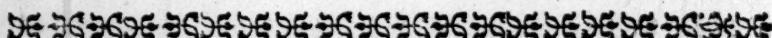
Thinking, perhaps, he had been somewhat too severe in the above, he added this postscript by way of cordial :

‘ P. S. I shall constantly write to Mr. D——n : — he will be able to inform you how to direct for me : — you may be assured I shall receive with pleasure any letters that bring me an account of your welfare, and in spite of all that has hap- pen’d, do you every service in my power.’

After having sent this by the groom who had first discover’d the place of her abode, and given some necessary instructions to his other servants, he hurried away to meet the post-chaise, and I saw him no more. As I had truly pitied Isabinda, I could not forbear going to see in what manner she supported this last dreadful accident. On my entrance she was in bed, and surrounded by women and physicians : — I gather’d from their discourse, that the surprize and grief she had been in had caused an abortion, accompanied with fits of a very dangerous nature : — on my next visit, however, I found her youth and the strength of her constitution had got the better of her disease ; but though the pains of her body were removed, those of her mind still remained : — she was extremely

melancholy,—had a thorough contempt for the world; and the thoughts of a monastery were now so far from being shocking to her, that she resolved to fly to one, as the only asylum from censure and from care. Accordingly, as I was afterwards informed, she went, on the re-establishment of her health, to Paris, and entered herself into the society of Benedictine Nuns, where I doubt not but she often sees her brother through the grate, as he still continues to reside in that city.

I have now finished all the account I am able to give of this melancholy transaction, in which the justice of Providence seems to me to be distinguished in somewhat of a peculiar manner; and may serve as a warning to our gay amorous sparks, not to become the seducers of unwary innocence; especially if they will be at the trouble of reflecting, how the perfidy and ingratitude of Flaminio, to the believing Harriot, was afterwards retorted on his own darling daughter.



C H A P. VI.

Gives the account of an occurrence no less remarkable than entertaining; and shews that there is scarce any difficulty so great but it may be got over, by the help of a ready invention, if properly exerted.

TO make some atonement for my last melancholy recital, to those of my readers who may not care to have their heads filled with subjects of too serious a nature, I shall now present them with one more likely to put in motion the risible muscles of the face, than to extort the falling of unwilling tears.

A gen-

A gentleman, whom I shall call Conrade, had lived to the age of sixty without ever testifying the least inclination to marriage : — he had been a man of pleasure in his youth, and probably the too great success he then found among the fair, had deterred him from entering into an honourable engagement with any of the sex : — but there is no accounting for change of sentiment in this point : — an accident sometimes puts that into our heads which before we never thought of, or perhaps we had an aversion to, — as it fell out in the case of the person I am speaking of. A long friendship had subsisted between him and Murcio, a gentleman, who, though not so far advanced in years, had made a better use of his time, — had been married, and was the father of three fine daughters, — two of whom had always lived with him ; but the youngest, after the death of his wife, was taken from him, and brought up under the care of an aunt in the country. The eldest of these ladies being now about to be disposed of in marriage, Conrade received, and accepted an invitation to the wedding : — Melanthe, sister to the bride, was a fine sparkling girl of nineteen ; but whether it were that she appeared in reality more lovely than usual, or that the mirth and pleasantries common at such solemnities rekindled the long-smothered embers of amorous desire in the breast of Conrade, so it was, that he, who had been in the company of this young lady without taking any notice of her charms, all at once became extremely smitten with them, — insomuch that he resolved to acquaint her father with his new passion, and ask his consent to make his addresses to her ; which he did not at all despair of obtaining, on the terms he intended to propose.

Murcio had a pretty country-house at a village about ten or twelve miles up the river, where he

constantly went every Saturday, and staid till Monday or Tuesday, and sometimes longer: --- it was while he was in this retirement that Conrade chose to communicate to him the business he had in his head: accordingly he went thither, and found him entirely alone; --- Melanthe having been prevented from going, as she was accustomed to do, by a violent fit of the tooth-ach. This our old lover looked upon as a good omen, being desirous to engage the father in favour of his passion, before he made any declaration to the daughter. He began with saying, that he now repented having lived so long a bachelor; --- that having a very large estate, he should be glad of an heir to enjoy it; --- that if he could prevail on a young lady whom he liked to marry, he would endeavour to atone for the want of youth by all the indulgencies in the power of a fond husband; --- and having thus prepared the way, told him, that if he thought proper to bestow Melanthe upon him, he would desire no other fortune than her person; yet would settle a dowry upon her superior to what might be expected if she brought him ten thousand pounds.

It is not to be imagined with what greediness Murcio swallowed this proposal; --- he did not even affect to hesitate, or make the least demur on accepting it: on the contrary, he replied, that nothing could afford him a greater satisfaction than such an alliance, and that he doubted not but Melanthe would receive the honour he intended her as a woman who knew her own interest and happiness. Both parties being equally transported, every thing was immediately agreed upon between them; but Murcio not being able to assure himself that his daughter would so readily comply as he had made the lover hope she would, and fearing that if she should give the old gentleman a rebuff on his first onset,

onset, it might discourage him from making a second, and perhaps overturn the whole affair, resolved not to hazard the loss of so advantageous a match by leaving it to her own choice, but sent a special messenger to her with a letter, the contents whereof are these :

• DEAR CHILD,

• MY worthy friend Conrade has taken a great
• liking to you, and will make you his wife on
• such terms as would but little prove the paternal
• affection I have for you to reject ; --- be not you
• less thankful to Heaven for so unhoped a blessing
than I am ; nor, on any foolish pretences, either
• slight, or seem to slight, the good presented to
• you. --- If you consider the vast advantages of this
• match, a disparity of years can be no objection :
• I say thus much because I would convince your
• reason, not enforce your action ; for I should be
• sorry to find myself obliged to make use of the
• authority I have over you in a thing which you
• ought, and I hope will receive with the same sa-
tisfaction I propose it : —— know, however, that
• I have already agreed on every thing for your
• marriage, --- that your future husband is now here,
• and we shall both be in town either to-morrow
• or the ensuing day. —— I send this on purpose
• to prepare you to behave towards him in a pro-
per manner, and as it is the absolute command
• of him who is

• Your affectionate father,

• MURCIO.*

I stood behind Melanthe's chair while she was reading this epistle, and never did I see a poor young creature in such agitations ; --- scarce had she come to the end of the first period, before she

cry'd out, — ‘ His wife! — his wife! — what terms
‘ can the old creature propose to compensate for the
‘ odious title of wife to such a wretch ! ’ Then
going a little farther, ‘ Justly, indeed, said
‘ she, does my father suspect my obedience in
‘ this point : — death itself would not be so dread-
‘ ful to me as compliance.’ — The more she pro-
ceeded, the higher her distraction grew. — ‘ What !
‘ fix my doom at once ! raved she out ; at once
‘ resolve to cut me off from all the joys of life,
‘ and condemn me to everlasting misery ! — Is this
‘ a parent’s love ! — oh, ’tis most cruel, — most un-
‘ natural ! ’ I know not to what extravagancies
she might have been hurried by the sudden rush
of grief and despair, if tears now had not afforded
their relief ; — but tho’ they a little softened the
asperity of her passion, they had not the power
to subdue it : her tongue, indeed, ceas’d from ex-
claiming against her fate ; but the agonies of her
countenance discovered how much she inwardly
regretted it. While she was in this distressful
and pity-moving situation, the gay, the lively Flori-
mel came in : — this young lady was the most be-
loved and intimate companion Melanthe had : — she
saw her almost every day, and always entered with-
out ceremony : — she seemed a little surprised at
first sight to find her thus, but immediately recov-
ering herself, approached her with her accustom’d
sprightliness.

Florimel. ‘ Heydey, Melanthe, what in the name
‘ of wonder makes you in this pickle ? — Is your
‘ favourite squirrel dead ? or has any accident hap-
‘ pened to your last new pet-en-l’air ? or what
‘ other misfortune has befallen you ? ’

Melanthe. ‘ O Florimel ! what would I not
‘ give to be in thy condition ! ’

Florimel.

Florimel. ‘ My condition ! --- why what do you
‘ find to envy in my condition ? ’

Melanthe. ‘ To have no father to controul your
‘ actions by an unreasonable exertion of his autho-
‘ rity.’

Florimel. ‘ Why truly, as you say, these old
‘ dads are troublesome enough sometimes ; --- yet,
‘ for all that, I should be heartily glad mine were
‘ alive again. But pray what has yours done to
‘ make you wish yourself an orphan ? ’

Melanthe. ‘ Read that, and see if I have not
‘ cause.’

In speaking these words she pointed to her fa-
ther’s letter, which lay open on the table : --- Flo-
rimel took it up and read it as desired : — on
examining the contents, she could not help looking
a little grave ; but having finished, resumed the
discourse with her former vivacity.

Florimel. ‘ As sure as I am alive, both these old
‘ gentlemen are crack’d-brain’d ; --- the one in
‘ thinking of you for a wife, and the other in con-
‘ senting to give you such a husband.’

Melanthe. ‘ One would, indeed, imagine they
‘ were not in their senses.’

Florimel. ‘ For my part, I am so astonish’d, that
‘ I can scarce believe I am awake. --- But what
‘ will you do ? ’

Melanthe. ‘ Nothing.’

Florimel. ‘ Nothing can come of nothing, as
‘ King Lear says in the play : I am less surprised,
‘ however, at your stupidity in so perplexing a
‘ dilemma, than I am at the folly of those who
‘ have involved you in it. --- Bless me, what can
‘ either your lover or father propose to them-
‘ selves by such a disproportionalable alliance, but

‘ horns

‘ horns on the one side, and disgrace to his family
‘ on the other.’

Melanthe. ‘ No, Florimel, it shall never come
‘ to that :—I will rather starve or beg.’

‘ *Florimel.* ‘ Look ye, my dear, neither starving
‘ or begging, as I take it, will agree with your con-
‘ stitution ; something else must be thought on.’

Melanthe. ‘ What else ?’

Florimel. ‘ Do you think, that when your fa-
‘ ther comes to know what an implacable aver-
‘ sion you have to this match, he will not be pre-
‘ vailed upon to recal the promise he has made to
‘ Conrade ?’

Melanthe. ‘ Impossible ! — I know his temper
‘ too well to flatter myself with such a hope :—
‘ you might as well think to blow St. Paul’s from
‘ its foundation with a single breath, as move him
‘ to recede from any thing he has once resolved.’

Florimel. ‘ Well then — suppose some way
‘ could be contrived to make Conrade himself fly
‘ off. I have a project in my head that promises
‘ fair for it, if you will agree to join in the execu-
‘ tion. It is this : — you must admit a spruce
‘ young gallant to lie with you all night ; — Con-
‘ rade must be informed of the amour, in such a
‘ manner as to make him convinced of the truth
‘ of it ; and the deuce is in him if afterwards he
‘ insists on marrying you.’

Melanthe. ‘ Fye, Florimel : — how can you be
‘ so cruel to rally my misfortunes ?’

Florimel. ‘ No, I protest I am as serious as a
‘ judge upon a criminal cause ; and would fain
‘ have you make the experiment.’

Melanthe. ‘ What ! — wouldst thou have me
‘ turn prostitute to avoid marriage ?’

Florimel. ‘ No such matter ; — I will engage
‘ that the gallant I mean shall lie as harmless by
‘ your side as an infant.’

Melanthe.

Melanthe. ‘ Prithee do not torture me with such riddles.’

Florimel. ‘ I shall presently explain them. — The gallant I am speaking of, and who is to be your bedfellow, is no other than my own individual self: — I shall put on a suit of my brother’s cloaths, and do not doubt but that when I am dress’d, and equipp’d in all my accoutrements, I shall be a figure handsome enough to make an old man jealous.’

Melanthe. ‘ Sure never was so wild a scheme; but yet I cannot conceive how it is to be conducted, or which way it can answer the end you propose by it.’

Florimel. ‘ Lord, — you are strangely dull, or affect to be so; — but I will shew you what I shall write to Conrade, and that may help to enlighten your understanding.’

This witty lady waited not to hear what reply her friend would make, but ran to a desk, and immediately wrote the following lines :

To HUGH CONRADE, Esq;

‘ SIR,

‘ EVER since I heard of your intended marriage with Melanthe, I have been divided in my thoughts, whether the treachery of betraying a secret entrusted to me, or by concealing it expose a gentleman of your character to the worst of mischiefs, would be the most dishonourable action: — the latter consideration has at last prevailed; and I think it my duty to inform you, that the lady you are about to make your wife has neither heart nor honour to bestow upon you; — both are already disposed of to a person she thinks more agreeable to her years:

‘ — not

— not content with the many private assignations she has with him abroad, she frequently makes pretences, when her father goes into the country, to be left at home, where her chamber-maid, who is in the secret, admits this happy lover at midnight, and lets him out early in the morning, before the other servants of the house are stirring :—Murcio being gone to *****¹, I am well assured it will be in your power to convince yourself of the certainty of this intelligence, by sending any one on whom you can depend to watch about the door, either for the entrance or exit of the favourite gallant : — act as you please, however ;—I have discharged the dictates of conscience in giving you this timely warning, and am

‘ Your nameless servant.’

This she gave Melanthe to read, and as soon as she had done, was going to ask her how she approved of the contrivance, when the other prevented her by crying out,

Melanthe. ‘ Oh the wicked, lying letter ! — Dear Florimel, if this should be sent, and Comrade should shew it to my father, I believe he would kill me.’

Florimel. ‘ ’Tis possible he may not shew it ; but if he does, you have only to prepare yourself for a little scolding or swearing ;—the worst he can do is to turn you out of doors ; — and then, to use your own words, it can be but starving or begging.’

Melanthe. ‘ Oh, but my reputation, Florimel ! ’

Florimel. ‘ A fiddle of your reputation — would you hazard nothing to avoid being tacked, till death do you part, to such a lump of decay’d morta-

‘ mortality as Conrade? — Besides, when the affair is all over, and you are once got free from this cursed engagement, it will be easy, by unravelling the plot, to clear your reputation, and reconcile you to your father into the bargain.’

Melanthe. ‘ Oh, Florimel, if I was sure of that !’

Florimel. ‘ Trust to fortune; — I will lay my life, that if you behave according to my directions, every thing will go right.’

Melanthe. ‘ Well then, — tell me what I am to do.’

Florimel. ‘ In the first place, when your father comes home, you must seem to be as well pleased with the match as he would have you be, and pretend that you are mightily in love with Conrade’s estate, whatever you are with the man; — then, as for the old wretch himself, you have nothing to do but to simper and look silly when he makes his addresses, and tell him that you are all obedience to your father’s will.’

Melanthe. ‘ This is a hard task, and I am a very ill dissembler; — I will try, however, what I can do; — but, Florimel, — there is one thing that neither you nor I have yet thought upon: suppose Conrade should take it into his head to watch the door himself, and draw upon you in passion?’

Florimel. ‘ What if he does? — I shall have a sword as well as he.’

Melanthe. ‘ But not understand so well how to use it?’

Florimel. ‘ I don’t know that; — but if I can’t fight as well, I am sure I can run much better; — so pray do not be under any concern on my account.’

These fair friends parted not till the night was pretty far advanced ; all which time was taken up with settling some farther particulars in relation to their design.—Molly the waiting-maid was called in, and, after a vow of secrecy, intrusted with the whole affair.—She seemed a good smart girl, highly proper for the business she was to be employed in, and readily promised her assistance. As I was very near as impatient as themselves for the success of this whimsical enterprize, I went every day to Murcio's house, and found that Melanthe acted the part she had been taught by Florimel, so as to give the utmost satisfaction both to her father and lover ;—who now talked of nothing but to have the wedding solemnized as soon as the necessary preparations for it could be made.

Saturday being arrived, I made it my business to enquire whether Murcio was gone to his country seat ; and finding he was, and that Melanthe staid at home, concluded this was the day on which the first wheel of the machine was to be put in motion ; therefore hurried away to the house of Conrade, where I luckily came time enough to see him receive the letter from Florimel. The wrinkles of his face were greatly agitated while he was reading this epistle : — at first his eyelids extended themselves, and his brows were elated with surprise, — then were contracted into a frown of anger : — sometimes a sneer of contempt and disbelief lengthened the furrows round his withered lips ; but the attitude of longest duration, was a pensive hanging-down of his head, accompanied with cutting the hairs upon his little finger ; out of which at last he started, and cry'd to himself, — ‘ Many reasons may be urged both for and against my giving credit to this.

‘ this story ; — but whether built upon truth or
‘ malice, I have no need to be at the pains of
‘ considering ; — the author has pointed out the
‘ means of being convinced, and I will take his
‘ counsel.’

As I could not be certain that he would continue in this resolution, and much less so, if he did, what the event of it would be, I went by break of day the next morning, and posted myself over-against Murcio's house : — In a few minutes after Conrade came, wrapp'd in a cloak, but stood more aloof, yet near enough to see every thing that pass'd. — We had not waited above a quarter of an hour, before the door we watched was softly opened, and a well-dress'd beau rush'd out : — Conrade advanced, as fast as his gout would let him, in order, I suppose, to see the face of this invader of his hoped-for happiness ; — but the pretended gallant was too nimble for his pursuit ; — but dropt a piece of paper, as if by accident flirted out with his handkerchief : — Conrade immediately snatch'd it up, and found it was a billet ; — the superscription seemed to have been torn off, but the contents were these :

I easily perceived that this was a second plot of the young ladies to corroborate the first;—and it had all the effect they could wish, and was also productive of something else, which neither of them at that time imagined; as will appear in the succeeding chapter.

C H A P. VII.

Is a continuance of this merry history, which presents something as little expected by the reader as it was by the parties concerned in it.

IT is not to be doubted but that Conrade, after having received this double confirmation of Melanthe's transgression, gave over all intentions of becoming her husband;—yet, by what I could gather from his looks, and some expressions he let fail, the manner in which he should quit his pretensions was the occasion of a very great conflict in his mind.—He was a good-natur'd man, and loth to accuse this young lady to her father;—yet, to break off a match so far advanced, and which he had so earnestly solicited, without assigning any cause for the change of his resolution, he thought would not only make him appear ridiculous, but also put a final period to all conversation between him and his old friend; and he probably continued undetermined in this matter till he found himself obliged to talk upon it to Murcio himself, who had appointed to come to town the next day, in order to sign the marriage-writings.—That gentleman was at home, and having expected him some hours before he came, began, in a pleasant manner, to reproach his tardiness: to which Conrade reply'd very gravely, —‘ I am, indeed, sir, somewhat beyond my time, yet, I believe, soon enough for the business which now brings me.’—Murcio seemed much surprised on hearing him speak in this manner; and poor Melanthe, who was present, well knowing that this alteration in her lover's behaviour was the effect of the plot concerted between her and Florimel, trembled for the event, and was

no less shock'd at the thoughts how much her innocence suffered in his opinion.

It is uncertain what return Murcio would have made; for the other prevented him from speaking, by adding to what he had said before,—that he had something of a very extraordinary nature, and which required no witnesses, to communicate to him; on which he made a sign to Melanthe to leave the room; and she was no sooner withdrawn, than Conrade proceeded, tho' not without a good deal of hesitation, to declare himself in these terms:

Conrade. ‘ Dear Murcio, we have long been
‘ friends, and I should be heartily sorry that what
‘ I have to say should occasion a rupture between
‘ us; for my own part, there is no man living for
‘ whom I shall always preserve a greater esteem
‘ than for you self.’

Murcio. ‘ I cannot think, sir, that you have
‘ any thing in your mind should give me reason to
‘ regard you less.’

Conrade. ‘ Reason is too frequently misled by
‘ passion;—I know it by experience, and shall be
‘ glad to find yours is more strong;—tho' I con-
‘ fess I have been to blame, and am sorry things
‘ have gone so far:—but, sir, I have consider'd
‘ that it is now too late in life for me to think of
‘ marriage, especially with so young a lady as Me-
‘ lanthe.’

Murcio. ‘ This is an odd turn, indeed: me-
‘ thinks, sir, you should have consider'd this be-
‘ fore you made any proposal of that sort either to
‘ me or my daughter. A treaty of marriage, sir,
‘ when concluded on and consented to by both
‘ parties, is a thing of too much consequence to
‘ be broke off by either, without putting the most
‘ gross affront upon the other.’

Conrade.

Conrade. ‘ Not, sir, when it can be proved that
‘ the consummation would be equally inconvenient
‘ for both.’

Murcio. ‘ As how for both? My daughter has
‘ never made the least objection.’

Conrade. ‘ It may be so; — yet I am well
‘ assured she neither does nor ever can regard me
‘ with that affection which alone could make either
‘ me or herself happy in being united.’

Murcio. ‘ A mere whim; --- a caprice of your
‘ own, founded only on the disparity of years; and
‘ I am amazed you should think of flying off from
‘ your engagement on so shallow a pretence.’

Conrade. ‘ Perhaps I may have others: suppose
‘ I know she loves another?’

Murcio. ‘ Sir, I will suppose no such thing; ---
‘ she love another! --- no, sir, she has been bred
‘ up in principles too virtuous, and is too modest
‘ to place her affections on any one, till my com-
‘ mands, and the authority of the church, make it
‘ her duty to do so; and I must tell you, sir, it is
‘ base in you to add to the ill usage you are about
‘ to give her, by traducing her reputation.’

Conrade. ‘ I scorn the unmanly thought: be
‘ assured I have proofs of what I say.’

Murcio. ‘ Produce them then.’

Conrade. ‘ I will, since I find the justification of
‘ my own honour depends upon it. --- There, sir,
‘ — read that, and be convinced.’

In speaking this he gave Murcio the letter that had been sent by Florimel; which the other, after having carelessly perused, threw from him, and looking on Conrade with the utmost scorn, said to him,

Murcio. ‘ A notable proof indeed! — There are
‘ few people without some enemies; — but this is
‘ a piece

‘ a piece of scandal too gross, too stupid, and the invention too ill concerted to pass even on the most weak and credulous mind ; and seems rather a poor low contrivance of your own, to evade fulfilling an engagement you have taken it into your head to repent of.’

Conrade. ‘ You are free in your expressions, sir, but I believe it will presently be my turn to retort that contempt you so unjustly treat me with. — Do you know the hand-writing of your daughter ?’

Murcio. ‘ Yes, certainly I do.’

Conrade. ‘ Then judge of the contents of this, and take shame to yourself for the injurious treatment you have given me.’

The reader will easily imagine, that it was Melanthe’s little billet he now put into his hands ; but no one can conceive, niuch less am I able to describe, the rage, the horror, the distraction, that shook the whole frame of this astonish’d parent, on finding himself no longer able to refuse giving credit to so terrible a misfortune.—‘ Death and furies ! (cried he) infamous, abandoned wretch !’—Then, after loading her with all the foulest names that language could afford, he turned to Conrade, — ‘ Pardon me, dear Conrade, said he : had an angel told me what you did, without this cursed testimony I should not have believed the story,— but you shall have ample satisfaction : I’ll turn this scandal to my family, this deceiver both of you and me, out of my doors this moment ; — never own her, never see her more, but leave her to the miseries she merits.’ — He was running out of the room, and ’tis probable, in the first emotions of his passion, would have done as he had threaten’d, if Conrade had not with-held him ; and partly by force,

force, and partly by persuasion, made him sit down while he reason'd with him in this manner :

Conrade. ‘ Dear Murcio, compose yourself, and
 ‘ be not rashly guilty of a thing you hereafter
 ‘ may repent of : — consider that the errors of one
 ‘ branch of a family reflect dishonour on the whole ;
 ‘ —you have other daughters, who, though pure
 ‘ as innocence itself, yet, being of the same blood,
 ‘ may be suspected liable to the same faults : — for
 ‘ their sakes, therefore, rather smother than expose
 ‘ the crime of this fair offender.’

Murcio. ‘ What ! would you then have me to
 ‘ forgive, encourage, and suffer her to continue in
 ‘ this shameful prostitution under my roof ?’

Conrade. ‘ No ; — but I would have you re-
 ‘ member that she is still your child, and that it is
 ‘ your duty, as a father, to use your utmost efforts
 ‘ to retrieve her from perdition, not sink her deeper
 ‘ into it.’

Murcio. ‘ As how retrieve her ? — is she not
 ‘ already lost, — irrecoverably lost to reputation
 ‘ as well as virtue ?’

Conrade. ‘ Not so, I hope ; — all yet may
 ‘ be well, if her seducer can be prevailed upon to
 ‘ repair the injury he has done her by an honour-
 ‘ able marriage.’

Murcio. ‘ A vain expectation !’

Conrade. ‘ ’Tis worth attempting at least ; —
 ‘ but first you must oblige her to discover the name
 ‘ of this too happy man ; for you see, that
 ‘ either by design or accident, the direction to him
 ‘ is torn off the letter.’

Murcio. ‘ I protest, in the distraction of my
 ‘ thoughts I had forgot that circumstance ; and
 ‘ also to ask you by what means this infamous
 ‘ scrawl came into your possession.’

On this Conrade related to him all the particulars he had observed while he had been watching his rival's coming out of the house ; and when he had done, in order to encourage Murcio to take the advice he had just given him, added this description of the supposed gallant :

Conrade. ‘ I was very much vex'd that I had not an opportunity of seeing his face ; but his back being towards me, I could only take notice of his dress and air, and do assure you he has all the appearance of a man of fashion, and such a one as to whom you could not reasonably have refused your daughter, even if this accident had never happened.’

Murcio. ‘ Oh, what a curse it is to have a disobedient child !’

He appeared in the most bitter anguish of mind, while uttering these last words ; but having recovered himself a little, took pen, ink, and paper, and wrote the following lines to Melanthe :

‘ Thou scandal to my blood and name,
 ‘ THAT you still live to receive this, thank
 ‘ the gentleman whom you would have wronged
 ‘ by intending to carry pollution to his bed ; — he
 ‘ has obtain'd a reprieve for you on this condition,
 ‘ —that you declare the name and quality of your
 ‘ undoer, to the end that I may take such mea-
 ‘ sures as I shall judge proper, to oblige him to do
 ‘ justice to the honour of a family of which you
 ‘ are the only blemish. — Think not to deny your
 ‘ crime ; — I have the infamous witness of it under
 ‘ your own hand ; but be plain and open in your
 ‘ confession, if you hope ever to obtain mercy
 ‘ either from Heaven or your offended father,

‘ MURCIO.’

After having shew'd this to Conrade, he called for the waiting-maid, and bid her give that letter to her mistress, and bring him an immediate answer: — I followed, and saw with what agonies poor Melanthe read this cruel mandate: — between the fears of what her father's indignation might inflict upon her, and the shame of appearing guilty of a crime her soul disdain'd, she was so much overwhelm'd, that for some minutes she had not power to speak; and when she did, it was only to utter this exclamation:

Melanthe. ‘ What will become of me! — oh this vile plot of Florimel's ! ’

Molly. ‘ Lord, madam, do not put yourself into this flurry; — you know your father's temper well enough, and could not expect he would be less severe; — but it will be all over, and you must resolve to bear it for a while.’

Melanthe. ‘ I cannot, — will not bear it; — I will go down this instant, disclose all, and clear my innocence.’

Molly. ‘ Sure, madam, you would not be so mad. — What would you undo all, and be forced to marry Conrade at last?’

Melanthe. ‘ Was there ever so terrible a dilemma? — What answer can I give?’

Molly. ‘ Dear madam, say any thing; — tell him you are in love with him; say any thing but the truth.’

Melanthe. ‘ How silly am I to ask advice of such a giddy creature!’

With this she turned herself towards a table whereon stood a standish, sat down, paused a while, then began to write; but had scarce finish'd two lines before she left off, tore the paper, mused again, and then began afresh: — the second essay

met with the same fate as the former, and so did several succeeding ones, till at last she threw the pen out of her hand, started up and said,

Melanthe. ‘ ‘Tis in vain to attempt it,— I cannot write.’

‘ *Molly.* ‘ Why then, madam, say nothing;— e’en let him think as he pleases at present;—if you will but pluck up a spirit, we shall do well enough;—he will not kill you for his own sake; and as for any thing else, you must content yourself to submit to it:—nothing can be so bad as marrying Conrade.—I will go to Flormel presently; if I am so lucky as to find her at home, ’tis ten to one but she puts something into our heads.’

Melanthe. ‘ Do so;—I wish she were here.’

While they were speaking, Murcio called very loud at the bottom of the stairs for Molly to come down; on which she said, ‘ Do you hear, madam? — but I must face the storm for fear it should come hither and terrify you worse.—I wish you had as much courage as I have.’

She said no more, but ran hastily down into the parlour, where I with no less speed attended her footsteps, quite impatient to hear how the pert baggage would behave.

Murcio. ‘ What is the reason, minx, that I have no answer to the letter you carry’d up?’

‘ *Molly.* ‘ Lord, sir, there was somewhat or other in that letter that has frightened my poor lady almost out of her wits;—she does nothing but cry and wring her hands;—it would make your heart ach to see her. — She write an answer!—no indeed, she is not in a condition to give an answer.’

Murcio. ‘ If she can’t, you must, hussey. Who was that fellow you let out of my house yesterday morning?’

Molly. ‘ I, sir!—I let out no fellow, not I.’

Murcio. ‘ ’Tis false; — my friend here, happening to pass through the street at that time, saw him come out.’

Molly. ‘ Why then, sir, your friend is no better than a pickthank for bringing you such idle stories; and I am not afraid to tell him so to his face.’

Murcio. ‘ Was there ever such impudence!’

Conrade. ‘ Come, come, Mrs. Molly, you had better confess the truth; — it will be for the good of your lady, and yourself too.’

Molly. ‘ Sir, I shall not tell a lye for the matter; — I let out no fellow; — there was a fine gentleman, indeed, that sat up all night playing at cards with my lady that I let out; — but no fellow, I assure you.’

Murcio. ‘ Well,—and pray, Mrs. Brazenface, what is the name of this fine gentleman?’

Molly. ‘ Lord, sir, do you think I know the names of all the gentlemen that come to visit my lady? — Indeed I am not so impertinent as to ask.’

Murcio. ‘ No equivocation: — tell me this moment, or I shall be your death.’

Molly. ‘ Bless me! sir,—how can you fright a body for nothing? — But if you would be my death twenty times over, I can say no more than I have done.’

Conrade. ‘ Dear Murcio, this girl is not worth the passion you are in; — I hope the young lady herself will satisfy you, when once she considers how much it is her interest to do so.’

Murcio. ‘ Not while she has such a harden’d wretch to encourage her obstinacy. — Hussey, pack up your trumpery, and get out of my house directly,

‘ directly, or I shall provide a place for you in
• Bridewell.’

Molly. ‘ Oh, dear sir, I shall not give you
‘ that trouble;—there are places enough to be had
‘ without your providing.’

After she had left the room, and Murcio had vented his passion in two or three hearty curses, he turned to Conrade, and with a tone of voice which expressed the deepest trouble of mind, uttered these words: ‘ You see, my dear friend, that both mistress and maid are alike incorrigible. — What now remains for me to do, either to preserve my family from disgrace, or this degenerate girl from everlasting ruin?’ The other, who doubtless condemn’d Melanthe more in his heart than he would let her father know he did, could find nothing to say in her defence; but that he hoped, when the first confusion of this discovery was a little over, she would be brought to reason; and therefore intreated he would allow her some small time to recollect herself. As the conversation now began to consist only of railings on the one side, and persuasions to moderation on the other, I easily perceived that nothing of importance would be the result; so resolved to leave the two old gentlemen together, and accordingly took the first opportunity to get out of the house.



C H A P. VIII.

Presents something, which, if the author's hopes do not deceive him, will afford an equal share of satisfaction as surprise.

BEING very anxious for the situation of poor Melanthe, I fully designed to make another visit to Murcio’s house early the next

morning; and accordingly got to Mureio's door just as Conrade had alighted from his coach, and was stepping in; so I had an easy access, and followed him up into the dining-room, where Murcio was then sitting, and express'd the satisfaction he took in seeing him, in words to this effect :

Murcio. ‘ My dear friend, I am glad you are come to give me your opinion in a thing I am about to do: — my ungracious daughter has given me no answer, — made me no submissions; — I cannot keep her in my house; and if I turn her out of it, am in danger of having my whole family scandalized by her behaviour; I am therefore resolved to send her to Cornwall, where I have a near kinsman.’

Conrade. ‘ I flatter myself, sir, that the intelligence I bring will save you that trouble, and the young lady so long a journey: I have discovered her favourite lover.’

Murcio. ‘ Is it possible? — For Heaven’s sake, who, — what is he?’

Conrade. ‘ One you little suspect, tho’ I have seen him often here; — ’tis Dorimon.’

Murcio. ‘ Dorimon! — yes, since his return from his travels he visits here sometimes; — his sister Florimel and Melanthe were brought up together at the boarding-school, and since they left it have scarce been two days asunder: but I cannot think Dorimon has been her seducer: — she is neither above his hopes nor below his expectations: — if he had any inclination towards her, I know of nothing should hinder him from making his honourable addresses. — But what grounds have you for such a supposition?’

Conrade.

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Comrade. ‘ You shall hear. — You know I told you that I did not see his face ; but as I follow’d him a good part of the street, I took notice of his habit, which indeed had somewhat particular in it, and would have attracted my observation, had I seen it on any other person. — It was a dark olive-coloured French barragon, laced with a very rich Point d’Espagne down the seams ; he had also a fine flaxen wig with a bag, and a solitaire of an uncommon dimension ! — I then took him either for a foreigner, or one lately come from abroad ; — in the same dress, and as exactly as I saw him then, did I see him within this half hour at the chocolate house : — I cannot, indeed, swear to the man, but I think may safely to the cloaths, especially as I heard him say, on some gentlemen’s praising the suit, and telling him they believed there was not such another in England, that he was pretty sure there was not ; for he had bespoke it at Paris according to his own taste, and it had not been come over long enough for any one to take a pattern by it.’

Murcio. ‘ I must own there is a strong probability in what you say ; but yet, without a certainty, know not what measures I can pursue.’

Comrade. ‘ If you will take my advice, send for him ; I heard him say he should dine at home, so is scarce gone out ; — give some distant hints, at first, concerning a marriage with your daughter ; and, according to the answers he makes, you will be instructed how to proceed.’

Murcio. ‘ It shall be so : — I will not let him see I have any suspicion of my daughter’s fault ; and whether there be any thing between them or not, a proposal of the nature you mention cannot seem strange to him, as our families have always

lived together in a perfect harmony and good understanding.'

He had no sooner said this than he called a servant, and sent him with his compliments to Dorimon, to let him know he desired to speak with him immediately, if not otherwise engaged. After this the two friends had some farther discourse concerning what steps the father of Melanthe should take in this affair; when the fellow, who had been sent on the above message, return'd and told his master, that Dorimon said he would not fail doing himself the honour of obeying his commands in a few minutes; on which Conrade took his leave, and Murcio sat down, endeavouring to frame his temper and countenance so as to be suitable to the business he had in hand.

Dorimon appear'd in a short time; and the first compliments being past, Murcio began to open what he had to say, by telling him that he had a great regard for his family; that he was a fine young gentleman; and that being now five-and-twenty, he much wondered that he had not heard of his addressing some lady on the score of marriage: — To which Dorimon replied, that marriage was a thing he had not as yet much thought upon; and that having a sister who took care of his house, a wife was the less necessary to him. — Murcio then demanded, if he found any aversion in himself to changing his condition in favour of a woman of equal birth and fortune, and who would approve of his pretensions. — Dorimon seemed a little surprised at these interrogatories: but answered in the negative, with this proviso, that the person of the lady were equally agreeable. — Murcio thinking this reply a proper cue for explaining himself, did so in the following manner:

Murcio.

Murcio. ‘ What think you then of my daughter Melanthe ? ’

Dorimon. ‘ As of an angel, sir, above my hopes.’

Murcio. ‘ No fine speeches, Dorimon ; — deal sincerely with me. — Do you like her well enough to marry her ? ’

Dorimon. ‘ Yes, sir, upon my soul ; and should bless the hand that gave her to me.’

Murcio. ‘ Sir, I take you at your word, and give you mine that you shall have her, and six thousand pounds, if you think that a sufficient dower.’

Dorimon. ‘ I do, sir ; and though Melanthe is a sufficient fortune of herself, shall accept your offer, and make a settlement accordingly.’

Murcio. ‘ Then there remains no more than to get the marriage-articles drawn, which, if you please, shall be to-morrow morning.’

Dorimon. ‘ It cannot be too soon. — But, sir, may I not have leave to see her, to throw myself at her feet, and be assured she will not regret the happiness you bestow upon me ? ’

Murcio. ‘ Oh, sir, you have nothing to apprehend on that account ; for, to be plain with you, I designed her for another ; — she rejected the proposal, for which she has been under some disgrace ; but as I have since discovered her disobedience was occasioned by the affection she has for you, I was the more easily induced to pardon it : — she does not yet know that I consent to gratify her inclinations ; but you shall have the pleasure of telling her yourself.’

He then went to the door, and ordered a servant to bid Melanthe come down : after which he turn’d back, and said to Dorimon, ‘ My daughter will wait on you presently ; — I know you will excuse my leaving you together ; — I have business

‘ calls me abroad ; but expect to see you to-morrow morning, and shall have a lawyer here.’ He said no more, but went hastily away to avoid seeing his daughter.—He had not left the room above half a minute before Melanthe enter’d, but with a confusion impossible to be express’d; — she had expected no other, on being call’d down, than to meet some terrible effects of her father’s displeasure; — her eyes, red with tears, were now cast down upon the floor, as she advanced with slow and trembling steps; — nor saw she who was there, till Dorimon sprung forward, and took her by the hand with these words :

Dorimon. ‘ Charming Melanthe, how am I transported at the goodness of your father! — how incapable of expressing my gratitude for the permission he has just now given me of telling you how much, how truly I adore you !’

Melanthe. ‘ Bless me, Dorimon, what is the meaning of all this? — Where is my father?’

Dorimon. ‘ Gone, to give me the happy opportunity of endeavouring to inspire you with sentiments in favour of my passion, and conformable to his will.’

Melanthe. ‘ Your passion, and his will! — Certainly, Dorimon, you must either be mad, or I not in my senses. — For Heaven’s sake explain this mystery !’

He was going to reply, when his sister Florimel came tripping in: — that young lady having been inform’d by Molly of all that had passed at Murcio’s house, was extremely impatient to know how her fair friend behaved afterwards on that occasion: — Melanthe no sooner saw her than she flew into her arms, and cry’d,

Melanthe.

Melanthe. ‘ My dear, dear Florimel, what would I not have given to have seen you last night ? ’

Florimel. ‘ I was no less eager to be with you ; — but I find things have quite chang’d their face ; — I met your father at the door as I enter’d ; the old gentleman seems to be in quite good humour, desir’d me to walk up, and told me I should find you and my brother together.’

Dorimon. ‘ Ay, my dear sister, we are together, and I hope shall soon be join’d to separate no more.’

Florimel. ‘ Separate no more ! as how ? ’

Dorimon. ‘ By the indissoluble ties of marriage : — Murcio, the generous Murcio, has bestowed her on me. — To-morrow the articles are to be drawn, and there will then be nothing wanting but my angel’s consent for the consummation of my bliss.’

Florimel. ‘ And was this the business on which he sent for you in such haste ? ’

Dorimon. ‘ The same.’

Here Florimel burst into so violent a fit of laughter, as render’d her unable to speak for some time : — In vain Dorimon ask’d several times over the cause of this extravagant mirth ; and it was but by degrees she recovered herself enough to make this reply :

Florimel. ‘ I have found out the riddle ; it was I, brother, that have made this match ; yes, with the assistance of that suit of cloaths you have on.’

Then, addressing herself to Melanthe, proceeded thus : ‘ You must know, my dear, that it was Conrade himself that watch’d me coming out of your house ; I saw him stand perdu under Sir Thomas *****’s porch ; — he has certainly seen my

‘ brother in these cloaths, and mistaking him for me, has pass’d him upon your father for your supposed gallant.’ Dorimon was now as much confounded in his turn as the two ladies had been in theirs, till his sister, having first obtained Melanthe’s leave, related to him the whole history of their contrivance to break the match with Conrade:—this repetition occasioned some pleasantry between the brother and the sister; but Melanthe was too much ashamed to bear any great part in it:—her new lover observing her seriousness, spoke in this manner:

Dorimon. ‘ I have got nothing, Florimel, by the account you have given, but the mortification of that vanity Murcio had inspired me with; and dare not now flatter myself that Melanthe will so readily, as I once hoped, acquiesce in the agreement made between us.’

Florimel. ‘ If she does not, all will come out; and if so, Murcio will certainly return to his first engagement to give her to Conrade. — What say you, Melanthe? Have you aversion enough for my brother to run so great a risque?’

This demand made Melanthe blush excessively; she paused,—hung down her head; but at last made this return: ‘ So sudden a change in my fortune might well excuse me from giving a direct answer to such a question:—of this, however, you may be assured, that I have not courage to disobey my father a second time, and that I love the sister too well to have any aversion to the brother.’

On this Dorimon kissed her hand with a great deal of warmth, and said many tender and passionate things to her, which, as the reader will easily

easily conceive, I think it needless to repeat ; and shall only add, that between the brother and the sister, Melanthe was at last prevailed upon to confess, — that it would be without the least reluctance she should obey her father in the choice he had now made for her. Tho' there was now little cause to apprehend any disappointment in these nuptials, yet I resolved to see the thing fully concluded on : accordingly I went the next morning to Murcio's house, where I found him very busy with his lawyer ; — Dorimon came in soon after, and the writings were presently filled up, signed, sealed, and duly executed by both parties : — and the lawyer had no sooner left the room, than Murcio spoke to Dorimon in these terms :

Murcio. ‘ Well, Dorimon, I think there is no thing now wanting for the making you my son, except the ceremony of the church ; and I did not care how soon that also was performed ; — I do not love to see affairs of this nature kept long in hand ; — besides, you must know, that on my daughter's refusing to marry the person I first proposed to her, I swore in my passion that I would never see her face again till she was a wife.’

Dorimon. ‘ You may be assured, sir, I shall think every moment an age ; and I do not doubt but the knowledge of the vow you have made will very much expedite my wishes.’

Murcio. ‘ I am going directly to my little country seat, and shall leave you to consult with her about the day ; but will write to the rector of****, who is my kinsman, and desire he will perform the office ; when that is over, would have you both come down to ****, where you may depend upon meeting with a fatherly reception.’

Nothing

Nothing farther of any consequence was said by each of them.—Murcio took coach for the country, and Dorimon went to the apartments of his mistress; where strenuously pressing her for the speedy consummation of his happiness, her father's pretended vow served as an excuse for her compliance, and she consented that the wedding should be the next Sunday after. No accident retarded the fulfilling this agreement, and they were married on the day appointed; after which they set out, accompanied by Florimel, for *****, to receive the blessings he had promised to bestow upon them. As no one of the company had any reason to be discontented at what had happened, it is not to be doubted but the goddess of cheerfulness accompanied them in their little journey;—I say journey, because the sister of Dorimon having an aversion to the water, they went in a landau, in complaisance to her; but the subject of their conversation is not in my power to relate, as I had no opportunity of being witness of it.



C H A P. IX.

Contains a succinct account of some farther particulars, in some measure relative to the foregoing adventure.

HAVING married my two new-made lovers, the reader will possibly imagine, that the last act of the play is ended, and that I should now drop the curtain, to prepare for some fresh subject of entertainment;—but he must wait awhile;—I have not yet done with any of my characters; and besides, as there are many things which seem to require a farther explanation, I cannot think of parting with my favourite Florimel without giving her

her those praises which her wit and good-humour may justly claim. It is not unlikely, indeed, but that there may be some over-scrupulous ladies in the world, who will be so far from approving the character of this charming girl, that they will highly condemn her for assuming the air and habit of a man, tho' for ever so short a space of time; and even rail at Melanthe for consenting to put in execution the stratagem she had contrived for her deliverance from an evil so justly dreaded by her: Such as these will certainly think I have said enough, if not too much on the occasion, and perhaps throw aside the book, and cry, they will read no farther: — Well, — be it so, — the loss will be entirely their own; — I am pretty confident, neither my reputation, nor the profits of my publisher, will suffer by their ill-nature in this point. It is for the entertainment of the gay, the witty, and truly virtuous, who, by the way, are never censorious, that these lucubrations are chiefly intended; and if I am so fortunate as to please them, should give myself no great pain what may be said of me by those of the above-mentioned class. In defiance therefore of these fair, or rather unfair critics, I shall proceed in what I have farther to relate concerning the principal subjects of this narrative.

On their arrival at *****, they were received by Murcio with a shew of the greatest satisfaction; yet I, who took care to be there before them, in order to be witness of what should pass at this first interview, could easily perceive that he embraced his son-in-law with more cordiality and less constraint than he did his daughter; — the remembrance of her supposed fault doubtless rendered him unable to treat her with his accustom'd tenderness; — he scarce touch'd her cheek in saluting her; and

when

when he gave her his blessing, added, — ‘ Pray
‘ Heaven your future conduct may deserve it.’ It
could not be otherwise, but that all the company
must comprehend the full meaning of these words ;
but poor Melanthe was so much affected by them,
that she burst into a flood of tears, and throwing
herself a second time at her father’s feet, address’d
him in these pathetic terms :

Melanthe. ‘ Oh, sir, — I beg, — I beseech you,
‘ by all the love you once had for me, to forgive
‘ the only act of disobedience I was ever guilty of ;
‘ pardon but the aversion I had to the match you
‘ first proposed to me, and you will easily absolve
‘ the rest.’

Dorimon. ‘ Yes, sir, — my dear, — my charm-
ing wife is as innocent of every thing that can
deserve your blame, as I am from even the most
distant wish of violating her purity, or dishonour-
ing your family.’

Flerimel. ‘ Ay, ay, — it is poor me that am
alone in fault ; but since the mischief I have done
has been productive of so much good, I scarce
doubt of being excused by a gentleman of so
much good sense as Murcio. — I have deliver’d
your daughter, sir, by my contrivance, from the
horrors of a forced marriage ; — I have procur’d
a wife for my brother, with whom if he is not
the most happy, I am certain he deserves to be
the most miserable of all mankind ; and I have
got you a son-in-law, who I hope will merit that
honour by his future behaviour.’

Murcio, who could not form even the most dis-
tant guess at the meaning of all this, look’d some-
times on the one, and sometimes on the other, with
all the tokens of the utmost amazement, without
being able to speak one syllable ; which gave Flo-
rime

rimel the opportunity of unravelling the whole mystery of the affair, as she had before promised Melanthe to take upon herself to do. In spite of the little resentment Murcio at first conceived for the trick that had been put upon him, he could not forbear smiling at the invention of the contriver ; and the wit and spirit with which that young lady talked to him upon it very much contributed to bring him into good humour : but that which entirely reconciled him to the wedded pair, was the consideration that Dorimon was wholly ignorant of the plot till after the marriage was concluded, and the assurance Melanthe gave him, that she was far from any intention to deceive him, but had flatter'd herself with the hope that Conrade would have broke the engagement, without mentioning to him the reasons he had for doing so. Though to have married his daughter to Conrade would have saved him six thousand pounds, yet the many ill consequences which would probably have attended so disproportionate a match now occurring to his mind, which before he had not thought upon, made him not only contented, but rejoiced, that this change of hands had happened ; and he could not forbear kissing and hugging Florimel for being the chief author of it.

Every one now endeavouring to outvie the other in giving testimonies of their good humour, among the many gay and gallant things said by Dorimon on this occasion, he protested to keep his French cloaths as long as he lived, for a perpetual Memento of the good they had done for him, and never wear them but on the anniversary of that happy day which gave his dear Melanthe to his arms. On falling afterwards into some discourse concerning the oddness of the accident which had brought about a marriage so little thought

thought of by either of the parties, yet so agreeable to both, as well as to their friends, Murcio expressed himself in this manner :

Murcio. ‘ I cannot help thinking that there is something peculiarly remarkable in this transaction; and looks as if the hand of Heaven had directed the accomplishment.’

Florimel. ‘ I dare almost engage my own life for the mutual happiness of theirs :—their humours are so exactly suited to each other, that neither of them is fit for any body else ; and, now I consider on it, am amazed, that in the long acquaintance they had together, this business never came into either of their heads till chance put it there.’

Dorimon. ‘ Nay, sister, I am now convinced, by the transport and the pleasing flutter at my heart, on the offer Murcio made of his daughter, that I was then passionately in love with her, tho’ without knowing it.’

Melanthe. ‘ And if you had been as indifferent to me, as I then thought you were, I should not certainly have been so soon and so easily persuaded to be your’s.’

Murcio. ‘ Well, all things have happen’d for the best, and there is nothing now wanting to complete my satisfaction, but the clearing up Melanthe’s innocence to Conrad. — I should be glad he were here.’

The word was scarce out of his mouth, when a servant came into the room, and informed him, that the person he had mention’d was below ; on which he ordered he should be immediately introduced. The old gentleman, who had heard nothing of what had happen’d, nor seen Murcio since the conversation with him repeated in a former chapter, had been impatient to know the success of his

his proposal to Dorimon ; and finding he did not return to town as usual, made him this visit at *****, in order to gratify his curiosity. He had not advanced above half-way into the room, when Murcio presented the bride and bridegroom to him ; and told him he had been just wishing for him to congratulate the nuptials. Conrade endeavoured to compose himself enough to salute them with the accustom'd forms ; but as he had not in his heart believed that Dorimon would be prevail'd upon to marry Melanthe, tho' he had advised her father to make the experiment, was so much surprised on finding the affair concluded, that he could not forbear testifying it in his looks, as well as by crying out,

Conrade. ‘ What, married ? ’

Florimel. ‘ Yes ; sir, — they are married, — the indissoluble knot is tied ; — for which all due thanks be given to your fortunate mistake.’

Conrade. ‘ My mistake, madam ? — pardon me if I do not comprehend your meaning.’

Dorimon. ‘ I believe you do not, sir ; yet it is to your mistaking another for me, that I am indebted for being put in possession of a happiness which otherwise I must have solicited for a long series of time, and perhaps at last never have obtained : — I do assure you, sir, I never presum'd to entertain one wish to the dishonour of Melanthe, and was sleeping in my own bed when you imagined me just risen from her arms.’

Murcio. ‘ He tells you nothing but the truth ; — he is innocent, so is Melanthe ; but here stands her gallant ; — here is the author of this enigma.’

In concluding these words, which he had utter'd with the most cheerful air, he patted Florimel upon her cheek, and gently push'd her towards Conrade ; but that gentleman was now in such a consternation,

sternation, that he scarce knew where he was; much less had the power of distinguishing the sense of any thing he either saw or heard, till Florimel related to him, in her sprightly fashion, every particular of that stratagem which had occasioned the breaking off the intended match between him and Melanthe:—Murcio also, and Dorimon, averring the truth of what she said, he began at last to see clearly into the whole affair; — after which Melanthe, with a great deal of modesty and sweetness, address'd herself to him in these terms:

Melanthe. ‘ I hope, sir, you will pardon the deception put upon you, as I was constrain'd to pursue so extraordinay a method, to avoid a thing which, in the end, must have been no less disagreeable to you than to myself: — I shall always acknowledge my obligation for the generous offer your affection made; but love, sir, is not in our power; — if it were, my gratitude to you, the consideration of my own interest, and the duty owing to my father, would certainly have inspired me with it.’

Conrade. ‘ Say no more, sweet lady, I am ashamed of my past folly, and only wish you would exert all the influence you have over your witty she-gallant, not to expose this story in print; I should be sorry, methinks, to see myself in a novel or play.’

Florimel. ‘ No, no, sir, you need be under no apprehensions on that score; — I would not, for my own sake, have the world know I put on breeches, lest my husband, when I get one, should be afraid I would attempt to wear them afterwards.’

This reply of Florimel's set the whole company into a fit of laughter, and would doubtless have been

been the occasion of many pleasant repartees, if the butler had not that instant given them a summons to the next room, where was a table elegantly spread with every thing suitable to the season; — but as I could not partake of any of the delicacies I saw before me, I thought it best to leave the house; so accordingly I slipt out, pluck'd off my Belt, went into a boat, and ordered the waterman to row as fast as possible to London; where being arrived, I contented myself with such fare as my own homely board afforded. Not many weeks had this adventure elapsed, before I heard that Florimel was married to a young gentleman whom for several years she had loved, and by whom she was equally beloved: — my insatiate curiosity, on this information led me to enquire into the hidden cause which had so long delayed the completion of their mutual wishes; and by ways and means too tedious to be here inserted, I at last discovered it to be such as attracted my highest esteem and admiration.

Dorimon had been a little extravagant in his equipage and way of living while on his travels; her whole fortune lay in his hands; and if call'd out, which in all probability would have been the case if she had married, he must have been obliged to mortgage some part of his estate for the payment; — it was therefore to save her brother from so great an inconvenience, that this generous young lady had been deaf to all the solicitations of a beloved lover, and the soft pleadings of her own heart, till Melanthe's fortune coming into the family, removed the only impediment to her wishes. Thus, by the most unseen, undreamt-of means, does Providence dispose every thing for the advantage of his favourites: — Florimel, by her wit and contrivance to serve her fair friend, without

out proposing the least interest to herself, or even imagining she could have any, not only brought about her brother's happiness, but met her own reward in the accomplishment of her felicity. These two families live together in the most perfect harmony; and Murcio, who is little less fond of Florimel than of his own daughter, passes most of his time among them: Conrade also is extremely intimate with both, insomuch that it is thought he will, at his decease, divide a good part of his large fortune between them.

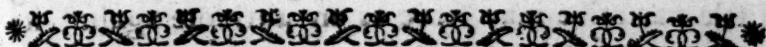
END of the SECOND BOOK.



THE



THE
INVISIBLE SPY.



BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

Is a kind of warning-bell to the public, and gives a melancholy, tho' too common proof, that a person in endeavouring by unjust or imprudent measures to avoid falling into an imaginary misfortune, is frequently liable to bring on effectually what might otherwise never have happened.

OF all the passions which distract the human mind, there is none more pernicious in its quality, or more dreadful in its consequences, than Jealousy ;—it is looked upon, indeed, as the most certain proof of a strong and violent affection ; yet it is such a proof as no one would wish to experience, as it infallibly involves the beloved object in a variety of disquiets, whether innocent or guilty ; nor is the person possess'd of this raging fury less wretched : so just are these words of Mr. Dryden :

O Jea-

O Jealousy ! thou raging ill,
 Why hast thou found a place in lovers hearts ?
 Afflicting what thou can't not kill,
 And poisoning love himself with his own darts ?

And as the inimitable Shakespear yet more emphatically, in my opinion, expresses it :

O what damn'd minutes tells he o'er,
 Who doats, yet doubts ; suspects, yet strongly loves !

But as jealousy frequently takes possession of the soul by almost imperceptible degrees, the following little narrative may serve as an antidote against its poison ; and warn every one, married persons especially, not to give way to its first attacks, lest it should be in time wholly subdued by it.

Cleora had from her very infancy been promised in marriage to the son of a neighbouring gentleman, about three years older than herself ; an inclination for her intended husband grew up with her years ; nor was his affection less tender for her, who he expected would one day be his wife ; but when the innocent pair became ripe for the consummation of their mutual wishes, an unhappy dispute happened between their parents, which entirely broke off the match at once, and they were forbid to see each other any more. As I was not at that time acquainted with either of the lovers, I cannot pretend to describe what their young hearts sustained in this cruel separation ; — it was doubtless very grievous to them both at first ; — but absence, and a variety of amusements, provided for them by their respective parents, in order to dissipate their chagrin, by degrees wrought the desir'd effects : — Leander, for so he was call'd, grew one of the gayest men about the town ; and Cleora was so far wean'd from the remembrance of him, that she

she obey'd her father without reluctance in receiving the addresses of Aristus, who, after the necessary forms of courtship, became her husband.

Few nuptials gave a greater promise of felicity ; — the births, the fortunes of the wedded pair were equal ; — their ages perfectly agreeable : — she was not quite nineteen, and he no more than five and twenty : — she was a very lovely woman, he a most graceful man. — He had ador'd her to so romantic a height, that it was thought, if he had not obtain'd her, a dagger or a bowl of poison must have been his fate. — She treated him with all the tenderness that could be expected from a virtuous woman by a reasonable man : — they were, in the first months of their marriage, the envy and admiration of as many as knew them. — But, alas, how uncertain is the date of human happiness ! — When Heaven is not pleased to bestow on us a contented mind, I mean, when we do not ask that blessing, and endeavour to acquire it, in vain indulgent Fortune lavishes her whole stock of bounties on us : we repine amidst our plenty, enjoy nothing we possess, and are wretches because we will be so.

The bridal house, so lately the theatre of joy and pleasure, soon became the cell of gloomy sullenness and black despair ; — the eyes of the beautiful Cleora were frequently seen red with weeping ; — she ceased to appear at any public place, and received very little company at home ; while on the brow of the once cheerful gay Aristus now lower'd a heavy melancholy, and all the indications of a deep inward grief. Every one saw the change, but none could presently discern the cause : it could not however long be kept a secret ; the servants who waited immediately on their persons were the

first who discover'd it : these reported it to the others, and they fail'd not to whisper it to as many as they were acquainted with, — that their master was prodigiously jealous of his lady.

The first tokens he gave of this frenzy, as I have been since inform'd, was to debar Cleora from going to the opera, the play, the masquerade, and all routs and assemblies, all which places she had been accustomed to frequent : — she obeyed him, notwithstanding, without murmur or repining ; and told him, with a great deal of sweet-ness, that if those diversions were infinitely dearer to her than ever they had been, she would readily sacrifice all the pleasure she took in them, to that of testifying her love and duty to him. Not contented with this, he proceeded farther, and forbad her to make any visits without him, except to his mother, who lived but in the next street ; — and then to let him know, that he might meet her there, and bring her home. — Hard as this injunction seemed to her, she complied with it, being resolved, if possible, to chace from his mind all those ideas she found he had conceived in prejudice of her discretion, and convince him that she regarded nothing so much as his satisfaction.

What more could woman do, or man expect ? — yet all was not enough to make this jealous husband easy. — Whenever they were abroad together, if any gentleman happened to be in company, the least gallant thing said to her, or complaisance returned to it by her, immediately set the worm within his brain a madding, and made him, on their coming home, reproach her in terms very unbecoming in him to make use of, and difficult for her to bear with patience ; — yet, nevertheless,

he

he still loved her, —— loved her to an excess ; ——
but, as the poet says,

No signs of love in jealous men remain,
But that which sick men have of life, their pain.

This behaviour of Aristus engrossed much of the conversation of the town, and various were the conjectures passed upon it : — some highly blamed him ; — others were apt to imagine there had really been some imprudence on the part of Cleora ; and not a few there were among her own sex, who, hating her for those very perfections which ought to have excited their esteem, scrupled not to pronounce her guilty of every thing she could be suspected of.

Much was this lady to be pitied — deprived of all those pleasures to which her youth had been accustomed, — ill-treated by her husband, — censured by her acquaintance, and secluded from the society of those who might have found means of diverting, if not wholly dissipating her melancholy. To add to her misfortunes, she had no friend near her to whom she might complain ; — her father being a widower, had broke up house-keeping soon after her marriage, and was retired with an intent to pass the remainder of his days with her elder sister, who was settled in a far distant county ; so that the only person from whom she received any consolation was Miss Lucia, the sister of Aristus, a young lady of great good-nature, and who believing her truly innocent, used her utmost endeavours to put all chimeras to her prejudice out of her brother's head.

The discourses which continually filled my ears about this family, and the different opinions the world had of the manner of their living together,

made me resolve to have recourse to my Invisibility, in order to discover which was in the right. Accordingly I went one day, equipt as usual with my Belt and Tablet, to make a visit at their house :— Aristus was abroad ; but I found Cleora sitting in a very pensive posture in her dressing-room. I had not been there above two minutes before her footman came in and presented her with a letter, which he told her was left for her by a porter, who said it required no answer, and was gone.

I must confess, that on hearing this, I was guilty of great injustice to Cleora, and began to be apprehensive that her husband's suspicions were founded on too solid reasons ; but I was soon ashamed of my rash judgment, when slipping behind her chair, and looking over her shoulder as she read, I perceived the letter was from Miss Lucia, and contain'd these lines :

‘ DEAR SISTER,

‘ WORDS cannot express how greatly I am
‘ troubled on finding myself obliged to send this
‘ instead of waiting on you in person ; — be assured
‘ I love and value your conversation as I ought,
‘ and shall no less suffer in being deprived of it,
‘ Heaven knows for how long a time, than you
‘ will do in the knowledge of the cause : — some
‘ idle stories, of which, I dare believe, my bro-
‘ ther’s unhappy caprice has been the sole occasion,
‘ have reach’d the ears of my mamma, and made
‘ her think it improper for me to be seen with you,
‘ while the world continues to judge of you in the
‘ manner it does at present : — she heard of your
‘ message to me, and strictly forbid me to obey
‘ the summons ; — you know too well, my dear
‘ Cleora, what duty is owing from a child to a
‘ parent, and also how much my father’s will has
‘ left

left me in her power, to resent the painful proof I now give of my obedience to her. — I wish, for my own sake as well as yours, that she, my brother, and every one that knows us, were as well convinced as myself, of your perfect innocence; but, till that happy time arrives, must content myself with the memory of the many happy hours we have passed together, and the hopes of many more yet to come, when once the horrid cloud which now separates us is removed. — Farewel, — that Heaven may send you comfort under your present affliction, and speedily relieve you from it, shall be the constant prayer of her, who is, with the greatest sincerity,

‘ Your most affectionate sister,

‘ LUCIA.’

Scarce had she gone through half this epistle before her countenance betrayed the effect it produced; disdain, rage, grief, seemed now to have united all their force to raise a tempest in her mind, which immediately broke forth in these and the like exclamations: — ‘ Deprived of my poor Lucia too, — and on so shocking a pretence! Good Heaven, for what unknown crime of mine, or of my ancestors, am I link'd into such a family? — Mother and son alike unjust, ungrateful, base, tyrannic! — Have I renounced all the gay amusements of life, submitted my temper to the will of an imperious husband, and made it my whole study to oblige him, to meet at last with this ungenerous, this barbarous return? — My virtue suspected, my reputation traduced, and my conversation shunn'd as a disgrace! — Oh, 'tis too much, — too much for human patience to sustain!

Many other expressions of the same nature did her passion vent, till at last, recollecting the request Lucia had made in the postscript of her letter, she snatched it hastily from off her toylet, and thrust it into the fire, saying at the same time,—
 ‘ Poor Lucia, however, must not suffer for her friendship to me.’

Aristus being returned home, was that instant coming up stairs, which being opposite to the room where Cleora was, and the door open, he had an opportunity of seeing this last action, though not of hearing the words which accompany’d it:— he flew like lightning to the chimney, in order to save the paper, not doubting but it contained something that might add fresh fuel to his jealousy; but, nimble as he was, the flames were yet more quick, and left not the least part of what he so much wanted unconsumed—This disappointment, joined with what he had seen Cleora do, so much inflamed him, that looking on her with eyes sparkling with indignation he saluted her with this reproach :

Aristus. ‘ I perceive, madam, you will be still too cunning for me:—had I come a moment sooner, I might perhaps have discovered enough in that paper to have silenced all your future boastings of virtue and fidelity.’

Cleora. ‘ Oh, sir, you need be under no apprehensions on that score; — the continuance of your base suspicions deserves not that I should be at any pains to undeceive you.’

Aristus. ‘ No,—’twould be in vain;—too well I know you;—nor can you,—dare you now attempt to justify yourself, after the glaring proof I have received of your infidelity.’

Cleora. ‘ What proof?’

Aristus.

Aristus. ‘ That paper, — perfidious woman ; — that paper, whose ashes, could they speak, would rise up in judgment against you.’

Cleora. ‘ This is madness, or some new pretext to use me ill. — Pray what can the most injurious of your imaginations suggest on the burning of a bit of paper ? ’

Aristus. ‘ Did I not observe your countenance while throwing the lewd scrawl into the fire ? — Did not your gloating eyes pursue it as you would the fellow from whom it came ? — Were not all the marks of guilt and confusion on your cheeks on my approach ? — But this is not all ; — I was told below that you had just received a letter by a porter : — answer to that, thou hypocrite ! — Does it become a married woman of your rank and circumstances, to receive letters brought by such messengers ? ’

Cleora. ‘ A married woman ! — say rather, a married wretch ; for such are all who have husbands like Aristus.’

Aristus. ‘ Still you evade the question ; but if you would not deserve to be the wretch you call yourself, — be once sincere, and tell me from which of your pretended admirers that letter came.’

Cleora. ‘ From none.’

Aristus. ‘ Perhaps then some female agents, — some fly promoter of your amorous intrigues : — but no equivocations ; — explain the whole, or by Heaven my sword —

Cleora. ‘ Do, — kill me, — it is the only act of kindness you can shew, and all I now wish to receive from you.’

Aristus. ‘ So daring in your crimes, abandon’d creature ! — but get out of my sight this moment, lest I be indeed provok’d to do a deed I might hereafter repent of.’

Cleora. ‘ Monster! — but to quit your presence is
‘ a command I shall always be ready to obey.’

It was with an unspeakable haughtiness that Cleora utter'd these words as she flung out of the room. I am apt to believe, by the amazement Aristus now appear'd in, that this was the first time she had ever testified any great marks of resentment for his ill-treatment of her: — he stood for some moments in a profound resverie, and when he came out of it, lifted up his hands and eyes to Heaven, saying, ‘ Good God, nothing but the most perfect innocence, or the most consummate guilt, could inspire a woman with so much boldness. I know not what to think.’ Then folding his arms, again seem'd lost in meditation; which having indulged awhile, the subject of it burst out in these words: ‘ If she were innocent, wherefore should she conceal from me the contents of that cursed letter? No, — ’tis too plain she is guilty. — In vain would my fond heart, that still doats on her, find excuses for her behaviour; — yet it would be some ease to be convinced; — but it is impossible, — she has too much art. How true, O Dryden, are thy words!

False women to new joys unseen can move,
There are no prints left in the paths of love:
All other goods by public marks are known;
But this, we most desire to keep, has none.

After this he walk'd several times backwards and forwards in the room, then ran hastily down stairs, as I imagined, in search of Cleora: but finding he did not, and went out of the house, I also left it too, having an engagement of my own that evening.

C H A P. II.

In which the reader is requested to expect no more than a continuation of the same narrative begun in the preceding chapter.

THE distress in which I left Cleora, and the knowledge I now had of her innocence, very much affected me, and I must either have changed my nature, or have lost that happy gift of Invisibility, which enabled me to discover almost every thing, not to have flown the next morning to the house of Aristus, in order to inform myself what effects the conversation of the preceding night had produced. I truly pitied the unhappy pair ; for though Aristus was unjust and cruel in his suspicions, yet I plainly saw he suffered no less in his own mind than what he inflicted on his much injured wife ;—especially when I reflected that he was not guilty through a want of affection for her, but a too violent excess of it ; as is observed by one of our best English poets :

The greater care the higher passion shews ;
We hold that dearest we most fear to lose.

Indeed I soon found, how much more than I could even have imagined, this offending husband deserved my commiseration :—he was abroad, and Cleora not yet risen from her bed, when I made my visit, which, as near as I can remember, was somewhat past eleven o'clock :—resolved, however, not to lose my labour entirely, I had recourse for intelligence to the tattlers of the kitchen, whom, according to my wish, I found busy in discourse on the very point I wanted. Some

took the part of their master, — some of their lady ; and upon the whole, I found that a second quarrel having ensued after Aristus came home, Cleora had refused either to sup or sleep with him ; but lay in a bed she had ordered to be prepared for her in another room ; on which he went not to his own, but had continued the whole night walking about the house, and behaved like a man totally deprived of reason ; and that when morning came he went out.

On a sudden, hearing the footman say that his master knock'd at the street-door, I followed as fast as I could, being more curious to see how Aristus would behave, than to hear what would be the issue of the contest between the servants. Accordingly I got close in the corner of an arch while he pass'd by, and could see nothing in his countenance of that ferocity the servants had been describing : — on the contrary, a perfect composure seemed to me to fit upon all his features, and left not the least traces of dissatisfaction. I attended him to the chamber, which Cleora had made choice of for her repose, if it were possible for her to take any, the preceding night. He knock'd gently at the door ; but finding it not readily open'd, retired and went into the dining-room, where he called a servant, and bid him seek his wife's waiting-maid, and order her to come immediately to him. The young woman presently appeared, though I easily discern'd not without some tremor of the nerves, expecting, perhaps, to participate in the effects of her master's displeasure : — her countenance, however, grew more assured when he spoke in the most courteous accents, saying,

Aristus. ‘ Is your lady awake yet, Mrs. Betty ?’
Waiting-Maid. ‘ Yes, sir.’

Aristus.

Aristus. ‘ Then let her know I am ready for breakfast, and ask if she will have the tea served where she is, or in her own dressing-room as usual.’

She said no more, and after making a low curtsey went out of the room, very much surprised at this sudden turn, as indeed was I, after what I had seen and heard; nor was able to determine as yet, whether the extraordinary complaisance he shewed was real or affected: — I was soon convinced, however, when the maid returned with this answer to his message:

Waiting-Maid. ‘ Sir, my lady desires to be excused; — she has got a violent headache, and begs not to be disturbed.’

Aristus. ‘ Tell her I bring her news that will make her well; — no, — hold, — I will go myself.’

With these last words he flew to the chamber, and pushing open the door, which was now unlocked, found his wife sitting in a very melancholy and dejected posture: — she started up at sight of him, and without giving him leave to speak, accosted him in these terms:

Cleora. ‘ ’Tis hard that no part of a house, of which I am flattered with the name of mistress, can protect me from the insults of a man who certainly married me with no other view than to make me miserable.’

Aristus. ‘ Oh say not so, — I will soon convince you to the contrary; — nor shall you ever more have cause to fly the presence of Aristus: — I own I have been to blame; have said and done a thousand things that I am ashamed to

' think on. But why, my dear Cleora, did you
raise my passion to that guilty height? — Why
conceal from me the author and contents of the
letter which gave me so much pain ?'

Cleora. ' It would be easy for me to justify my
refusal.'

Aristus. ' I know it would, my angel, full well
' I know it would ; -- but I am now let into the
' secret without your being guilty of a breach of
' friendship to oblige me.'

Cleora. ' What is it you mean, Aristus ?

Aristus. ' I have been this morning at my mo-
ther's, where speaking of our unhappy quarrel,
and the motive of it, my sister immediately
changed countenance, and after vindicating yo r
conduct with the utmost vehemence, and severely
condemning mine, confess'd that it was herself
that had sent that letter to you by a porter, and
had desired you to burn it as soon as read.'

Cleora. ' Dear Lucia ! — oh that the brother
had the sister's temper !'

Aristus. ' Brother and sister are equally devoted
to you : — if Lucia were Aristus, she would do as
Aristus does ; and if Aristus were Lucia, he
would act like Lucia : — the difference of sexes
makes all the difference in our sentiments or be-
haviour : --- her's is a tender friendship : --- mine a
raging love, which, while happy in your possession,
trembles at even the most distant possibility of
ever being less so.'

Cleora. ' Can it be love that suspects my virtue ?'

Aristus. ' By Heaven, my cooler moments have
never set you down as capable of wronging me,
or dishonouring yourself ; but when passion rages
in the soul, reason has little government over our
thoughts or words. I know I have been much
to blame : --- but, oh ! Cleora, forgive a fault oc-
casioned only by an excess of fondness. So dear
I prize

‘ I prize you, that I envy the very air that breathes
upon your lips, and wish to grow for ever there,
and keep out all intruders.’

Cleora. ‘ But do you consider how wretched
this causeless jealousy has made me?’

Aristus. ‘ Yes, and could tear out my heart for
having ever harboured the least unjust suspicion
of you; yet have I suffered torments much greater
than was in my power to inflict. — Could you
be sensible of the agonies I felt during this last
whole cruel night, you must, you would forgive
and pity me.’

Cleora. ‘ Mine have not been less; --- yet could
I forget all, had my reputation been untouched by
your ill-usage: --- but you now know the purport
of your sister’s letter; and can you think it pos-
sible for me to support, with patience, the being
looked upon by your kindred as a disgrace to the
family I am come among?’

Aristus. ‘ Think not so, my dear Cleora: ---
my sister was always assured of your innocence,
and a strenuous vindicator of every thing you did;
my mother never thought worse than that some
little inadvertencies in your conduct had wrought
me up to the follies I have been guilty of, which
she has just now severely chid me for: --- they
will both wait on you this afternoon, and give
you all the proofs in their power of the sincere
respect and tenderness they have for you.’

Cleora. ‘ Well, Aristus, if I could be certain
that this was the last trial you would make of my
good-nature, I might perhaps endeavour to think
no more on what is past.’

Aristus. ‘ If ever I fall back into my former
errors, despise me, --- hate, --- think me the worst
of men: --- no, be assured I am too much ashamed
of what I have been, ever to be the like again;
and as a proof of the perfect confidence I now
have

‘ have in you, henceforward keep what company
‘ you please, I shall prescribe no rules for your con-
‘ duct, I shall leave all to yourself, and be satisfied
‘ that all you do is right.’

Cleora. ‘ I shall take the less liberty for your
‘ granting me so much: --- but if you should re-
‘ lapse, remember what a certain celebrated author
‘ of our sex says on this occasion :

We women to ourselves this justice owe,
That those who think us false should find us so.

She spoke this with so enchanting a smile, that Aristus, though not yet quite sure that what he did would be agreeable, could not forbear catching her in his arms, and holding her for some time lock'd in the most strict embrace; — then letting her loose, and looking on her with the extremest tenderness, cry'd,

Aristus. ‘ Do you then forgive me?’

Cleora. ‘ I do.’

With these words she threw her snowy arms about his neck, put her face close to his, returning all the endearments he had just before given her; — after which, --- that is, as soon as the transport he was in would give him leave to speak, he said,

Aristus. ‘ My for ever ador'd Cleora, depend
‘ upon it, that the whole study of my life shall be
‘ to requite this goodness.’

Cleora. ‘ Treat me but as my actions deserve,
‘ --- I ask no more: --- but come, let us go to
‘ breakfast.’

With this they went arm in arm into the next room, where Mrs. Betty and the tea equipage waited their approach. I now left this once more happy pair to enjoy the sweets of their reconciliation;

tion; and as I doubted not but the contrition of Aristus would be lasting, as by many indications I had reason to think it was sincere, expected not that any future events, worthy the attention of an Invisible Spy, would happen to call me to their house again. But, unhappily for the persons concerned in it, a very few days after convinced me how little I was endowed with the spirit of prophecy; and also, that when once the fatal fire of jealousy has got possession of the mind, tho' it may lie dormant for a while, yet the least wafting of a feather, or even a shadow, is sufficient to give it motion, and kindle the smothered embers into a blaze.

I was loitering one morning in the Park, the air was serene and not cold, the time of year considered, for it was then November. — Few people being there, I had an opportunity of indulging contemplation with the wonders of nature, which even in the most barren season afford matter to attract our admiration, and was almost lost in thought, when I was suddenly roused from it by the appearance of Cleora, who, in a rich genteel dishabille, came tripping down the walk, and after looking two or three times round her, seated herself on a bench just opposite to St. James's-house. — My surprise to find a lady of her rank alone in that place, stopp'd my farther progress, and engaged me to draw near her, in order to observe whether chance or any particular motive had brought her hither. In less time than the taking a pinch of snuff would last, Aristus came as from the palace; — he saw his wife at a distance, cross'd over, and came to her, saying,

Aristus. ‘ What are you here, my dear, and
‘ alone ? ’

Cleora.

Cleora. ‘ You see I am, but did not expect to be picked up by a gentleman this morning — We are well met, however, and if you have no business that requires haste, should be glad you would give me your company while I stay, which will not be long.’

Aristus. ‘ With all my heart. — I was only going to the coffee-house ; and in return for my complaisance, you shall tell me by what accident I find you here thus unguarded.’

Cleora. ‘ Can one be unguarded where there are so many soldiers ? — But you must know I have been among the shops at Charing-Cross, and made a great many purchases ; — I chose to walk over the Park : — I had William with me, but as I knew the sentry would not suffer him to pass through with the things, I sent him home the other way : — when I came hither, I found the air so extremely pleasant, that I was tempted to sit down and enjoy a little of it, especially as I found nobody here that I thought would take notice of me : — and now you have the whole history of my morning’s transactions.’

Aristus. ‘ A very concise one : — but suppose, my dear, you had met with any of the Bucks, the Bloods, or the Buffs, how would you have escap’d their attacks ?’

Cleora. ‘ Why, I should have set my arms a-kimbo, and looked as fierce as they ; — those sort of ’quires are never bold but to the fearful.’

Finding, by their talking together in this gay manner, that they continued in perfect good humour with each other, I thought I had no business to be an eves-dropper any longer, and was going to quit the place where I had stood, when, just as I had taken it into my head to do so, two gentlemen came down the walk,

one

one of whom, in passing by the bench, stopped short, looked earnestly at Cleora, started, made a low bow, and then went on: — she returned the salute, but with a confusion impossible to be expressed; — she blushed, — she trembled through every joint, — her fan fell out of her hand, and she was ready to sink down upon the seat. A less observing husband than Aristus must have taken notice of this sudden change; but the alarm it gave his jealous heart was such as compell'd him to be speechless for some moments: — Cleora in vain endeavoured to recompose herself; all the efforts she made to suppress or to conceal her agitations rendered them but the more violent, and consequently the more visible. — Aristus at last broke silence with these words:

Aristus. ‘ You seem disordered, madam: — the sight of these gentlemen has had a strange effect upon you.’

Cleora. ‘ I was a little surprised at the sight of one of them; — but that is not all, — I am not well.’

Aristus. ‘ I see you are not either in mind or body; — my coming was unlucky. Had I been absent, you would doubtless have retained your former gaiety; — but this is no place to expatiate on the cause of your disorder; — I will get one of the soldiers to call a chair, — ’tis fit you should go home.’

He waited not to hear what answer she would make, but rose hastily up, and spoke to one who was not upon duty; — the fellow ran to do as he was desired, and presently returned with a chair: — while he was gone, Cleora had recovered herself enough to say to Aristus, — ‘ I perceive you are beginning to entertain sentiments to my disadvantage; — but have patience till we get home,’
‘ and

' and I shall easily make this matter clear.' As he was putting her into the chair, she added, ' You will follow presently.' To which he reply'd, ' I shall not be long after you; tho' I believe your own meditations at this time will be more agreeable to you than the company of a husband.'

I perceived very plainly, by the countenance of Aristus, that a storm was gathering in his breast, which I doubted not would break forth in thunder: ---I could not help being also of opinion, that there were some appearances on the part of Cleora not much to her advantage; --- I thought, however, that the best way to form a true judgment of the accidents of that morning, were to see them when they were together; so I forbore following either of them, and restrained my impatience till near the hour at which they usually dined, as being the most likely time to find Aristus at home. On my coming to their house I found the door open, and a footman in a laced livery sitting on a bench in the hall, as waiting for an answer to some message he brought; --- I went directly up to the dining room; --- no person being there, I pass'd on to Cleora's apartment, and found her writing at her bureau: --- a letter lay open before her, containing these lines:

TO CLEORA.

' MADAM,

' I HEAR D not of your marriage till some weeks after it was consummated; and when I did, the hurry of my affairs, being then just going to Paris, prevented my congratulating you upon it: I returned to England but three days since, and the first enquiry I made was concerning your health and place of abode; but the answers I received

ceived to these interrogatories were mingled with some other informations, which made me not quite sure that a visit from me might not give offence to that happy gentleman who is now your husband ; — I would not therefore take the liberty of waiting on you till I had first received your permission.—It is a blessing I ardently long for; but, whether proper for you to grant or not, beg you will believe that I am, with an esteem too justly grounded for change of circumstances to alter,

MADAM,
Your most faithfully devoted,
And most humble servant,
LEANDER.

The answer given by Cleora to the above billet was as follows :

SIR,
THAT I still retain a place in your remembrance demands my grateful acknowledgements, and am sorry to tell you, that it is at this distance only I can pay my thanks : — it is easy for me to guess of what nature the informations you mention have been, and think myself obliged so far to confirm the truth of them, as to let you know the favour you intended me is wholly improper for me to receive ; and to desire you will attempt no future correspondence of any kind, with her who is no longer mistress of her actions, but who must always preserve in her heart the best wishes for your welfare.

CLEORA.

Having seal'd this, she call'd her maid Betty, and bid her deliver it to the man who waited for it ; — then took up Leander's letter, and read it two or three times over to herself with very disturbed emotions ;

tions ; — after which she rose hastily from the posture she had been in, whether with a design to burn, or lay it carefully up, I cannot pretend to say, for her husband that instant flew into the room, and snatched it out of her hand ; — she shriek'd, and, in my opinion, very imprudently endeavoured to wrest it from him ; — his stature as well as strength being much superior to hers, he held it at arm's length, and read the contents, in spite of all her weak efforts to hinder it. Which done, he clapp'd it into his pocket, stamp'd, bit his lips, measured the room with wild unequal paces, — still as he turned, darting revengeful glances at the trembling Cleora : — these and other such-like frantic gestures introduced the following dialogue between them :

Cleora. ‘ What is there in that letter can have moved you thus ?

Aristus. ‘ Was it not sent by him whose sight this morning threw you into such disorder ? ’

Cleora. ‘ I was a little surprised at the sudden appearance of a person I had not seen for a long time ; but know not that the disorder I was in proceeded from that cause.’

Aristus. ‘ He knew it did, and I suppose sent you this by way of consolation.’

Cleora. ‘ You put an odd interpretation on his words as well as on my looks. Is this, Aristus, the effect of all those promises you so lately made ? ’

Aristus. ‘ When I made those promises I was so weak as to believe there was a possibility of your being faithful : — but I am now convinced of what you are ; — know that you are the most vile of women, and I the most accursed of men.’

Cleora. ‘ You make yourself, indeed, the one, by your unjust suspicions ; but no action of mine shall ever prove I am the other.’

Aristus.

Aristus. ‘ Death and furies ! — did I not meet
the villain’s servant with a letter from you in his
hand ? ’

Cleora. ‘ Suppose you did, — I wrote to forbid
his coming hither.’

Aristus. ‘ Yes, and no doubt to appoint a place
more convenient.’

Cleora. ‘ Tis false ; — nor would the man
whom your suspicions wrong me with, harbour
a thought to the prejudice either of my virtue or
my reputation.—No, if you had half his ho-
nour, or his love, I should not be the wretch I
am.’

Aristus. ‘ Then you confess he loves you ? ’

Cleora. ‘ He loved me once, and tho’ Heaven
thought fit to break off our intended union, I
believe he still preserves an esteem for me.’

Aristus. ‘ And you for him.—Hell and ven-
geance ! — Dare you avow this to my face ? —
Have I then only the leavings, the refuse of a
beloved rival ? —audacious strumpet ! ’

In speaking this he struck her so violent a blow
over the face, that the blood gushed from her nose
and mouth ; on which she cry’d out : ‘ Villain !
— there wanted but this to prove the baseness
of thy abject soul ! — but think not the name
of wife shall make me tamely bear such usage ;
— no, if the laws of England should refuse me
justice, I will fly to the remotest corner of the
earth, and seek refuge among the less barbarous
Hottentots, rather than live beneath the roof with
such a monster.’

How Aristus would have behaved on this is un-
certain ; — a servant that moment entered the room,
and told him that a gentleman, who it seems he had
sent for that morning upon business, was now come

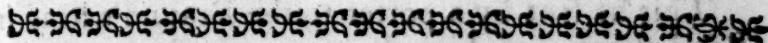
to wait upon him. Whatever was in the mind of this distracted husband, he had no farther opportunity of shewing it at present; and only giving a furious look at Cleora, and muttering some inarticulate curses between his teeth as he went out, left her to ruminant on what was past. She no sooner found herself alone, than she rung the bell for her maid, who appeared quite frightened on seeing her lady in such a condition: — the girl's exclamations made her turn to the looking-glass, and the injury that had been done her, it is probable, gave strength to her resentment, and she resolved to put in immediate execution what she had threatened Aristus with doing.

Betty had lived with her before her marriage, and was no stranger to the love that had been between her and Leander: the enraged fair-one therefore scrupled not to make her the confidante of the motive of this last quarrel with her husband, and the intention she had of quitting him for ever: — then, after considering a little in what manner she should manage this affair, gave the following orders: ‘I would have you take a hackney-coach for expedition sake, and go to Mrs. Clip’s the tire-woman,—I know she lets lodgings: if she has any apartment empty, hire it directly, but if her house happens to be full, do not return without procuring one for me in some other; for I am determin’d to go this very day, and shall think every moment an age till I am out of this detested place.’

While the maid was gone, Cleora set about packing up her cloaths and jewels, which she did with such adroitness and dispatch, that in less than an hour every thing belonging to her was ready to be sent away: — in a little more than that time Betty return’d, and told her that Mrs. Clip’s first

floor

floor being lett, she had agreed for the parlours, which she said were very handsome, and she believed her ladyship would approve of, at least till a better apartment could be provided.—Cleora was satisfied,—another coach was call'd to carry her, and the maid follow'd in the other with the luggage.—Aristus was all this time abroad:—he went out with the gentleman who had called on him, and his absence very much facilitated the execution of his wife's design; for had he been at home, 'tis certain that either his love or anger, or perhaps a mixture of both, would have attempted to detain her; but what effects the steps she had taken produced, both on the one and the other, must be left to the succeeding chapter.



C H A P. III.

In which the consequences of Cleora's elopement are fully shewn, and an end put to that suspense which the former pages may have excited in the mind of every interested and curious reader.

I staid some hours at the house of Aristus, expecting to be witness of something extraordinary in his behaviour, when he should be told of the departure of his wife; but he returning not in all that time, I grew weary of the tedious attendance, and quitted my post in order to go home; for as to Cleora, I had no thoughts of visiting her in her new apartment till next morning. It not being late, however, I took it into my head to call at a great coffee-house in my way, and lucky was it for the gratification of my curiosity that I did so; — I found Aristus there; — he was sitting at a table in one corner of the room, some distance from the other company, with paper and a standish before

before

before him :—I advanced with all the speed I could towards him, and saw him write the following billet to Leander :

‘ SIR,

‘ YOU are a villain, and have endeavour’d to wrong me in a point too tender to be forgiven : — I need only tell you, that I am the husband of Cleora, to inform you both of what I mean, and what sort of satisfaction my honour demands from you, which I expect you will give me tomorrow morning at seven, in the Artillery-ground, Tothill-fields : — the bearer has orders to wait your answer to

‘ ARISTUS.’

This he sent by a porter to the Braund’s head in Bond-street, at which house, as I afterwards discovered, he had with a good deal of pains got intelligence that Leander constantly supp’d every night.—I waited behind Aristus with an impatience, perhaps, not inferior to his own, to see what reply Leander would make to the above, till the porter return’d from him with these lines :

‘ SIR,

‘ THO’ your telling me that you are the husband of Cleora cannot make me in the least sensible how I deserve the name of villain, yet I can easily guess at the satisfaction you require, and shall not fail to meet you at the hour and place appointed, in hopes of being better inform’d for what imaginary cause you treat in this manner a person who neither knows or ever had any design to injure you.

‘ LEANDER.’

Aristus,

Aristus, after having read this, staid no longer than to drink one dish of coffee.—As I perceived he turn'd that way which led to his own house, I could not forbear accompanying him thither ; and I believe, by what I have to relate, the reader will think I had no reason to repent the pains I took.—He was no sooner enter'd, than he ask'd hastily for his wife, doubtless with an intention to renew his reproaches, and give a vent to some part of the fury he was possess'd of ; but never certainly did astonishment work a more strange effect.—On being told she was gone, and the manner in which she went, the sudden shock at once deprived him both of speech and motion ; — his face grew pale as ashes ; — his eyes were fix'd in a stupid stare ; — and had he been buried for three days, scarce could he have appear'd more the ghost of what he was the moment before.—His deaden'd faculties by degrees reviving, the first use he made of them was to call up all the servants, asking first one, and then another,—Why she was suffer'd to depart ? — Why they did not stop her ?—To which they answer'd, That having no order from him, they durst not presume so far ; — and besides, they knew nothing of her going till they saw the coaches at the door, and the portmanteaus carry'd out.

He next demanded to what place she had directed herself to be carried ; — but both Cleora and her maid having taken the precaution to give no order to the coachman till they were got some distance from the house, no one of them was able to give him any information ; on which he sent them out of the room, not without some curses on their indolence in not following the coaches ; — then, thinking himself alone, began to give a loose to the dictates of his despair and rage in these expressions :—
‘ Then she is lost ! — for ever lost to me ! for if

' she should return, my honour, after this, would
 ' not permit me to receive her.—Why did I ever
 ' marry? —What demon tempted me to become
 ' the husband of a woman, whom I knew all man-
 ' kind must love as well as I? — Curse on my
 ' fond passion! — Curse on her fatal charms! —
 ' Oh the deceiver! —the vile hypocrite! — There
 ' is no longer any room for doubt; her flight has
 ' proved her guilt.—Revenge is now my sole re-
 ' lief;—she for the present has escaped my reach;
 ' but I will stab her image in Leander's heart.—
 ' Oh that it were morning!'

While uttering the latter part of this exclama-
 tion, he flew about the room as if totally bereft of
 reason; till his spirits, at length exhausted by the
 violence of his rage, sunk into the contrary ex-
 treme, that of dejection; — he folded his arms,
 sigh'd, and with tears bursting from his eyes, cry'd
 out: — ‘ Oh Cleora! Cleora! — lovely perfic-
 dious wanton, to what hast thou reduced me?’ —
 He then threw himself down on a settee, with
 groans like those which issue from the breasts of
 men dying in their full vigour; — whence, after
 having lain some time, he started up, saying, — ‘ I
 ' will think no more! — to hear of my distrac-
 tions would but sooth her pride.’

He seemed now a little more composed, and call'd
 for something to eat; but on its being brought, could
 not put one morsel into his mouth; so rose from
 table and went up to his own chamber, where I
 did not think fit to pursue him, as having already
 seen enough to make me know the present dispo-
 sition of his mind. — It was my full intention,
 however, to go in the morning to the Artillery-
 ground, to be spectator of the combat between him
 and Leander; but was disappointed by sleeping be-
 yond

yond the time they were to meet.—This a little vex'd me; but I consoled myself with the thoughts of being able to hear the event, by calling some part of the day at the house of Aristus, for I knew not where Leander liv'd; but my concern for Cleora carrying me first to her lodgings, there I got all the intelligence I wanted; I found that lady, as I believe, just risen from her bed, for she was in a loose entire deshabille;—she seem'd very pen-sive, and had the marks of her jealous husband's resentment still flagrant on her lovely face.—Betty was not with her when I came in, but enter'd immediately after, and surprised her with these words:

Betty. ‘ Oh! madam, — I have the strangest thing to tell you! Who does your ladyship think I have seen?’

Cleora. ‘ Nay, I know not.—Who, pray?’

Betty. ‘ The very footman that brought your ladyship the letter yesterday, and put my master into such a rage; — I was never so confounded in my whole life.’

Cleora. ‘ Confounded! for what? — Where did you see him?’

Betty. ‘ In the kitchen, madam: — when I went down, just now, to put on the tea-kettle for breakfast, who should I see there but him talking to Mrs. Clip: — his master lodges here in the apartment above.’

Cleora. Good Heaven! — Was there ever so unfortunate an accident? — To come to lodge in the same house with the man whom at present it most behoves me to avoid! — Do you think he knows you?’

Betty. ‘ O yes, madam; — your ladyship may remember it was I that took the letter from him, and carry'd down your answer — I warrant he knows me again; but if he did not, I

‘ find Mrs. Clip has been babbling to him about your ladyship, for I heard her mention your name as I was upon the stairs.’

Cleora. ‘ Sure I was infatuated not to forbid that woman telling any body I was here;—but I must remove immediately:—it would be my utter ruin if my husband, or any of his friends, should hear I had lain in this house but only one night.’

Betty. ‘ Very true, indeed, madam;—and as soon as your ladyship has had your breakfast, I will go out and get another lodging.’

Cleora. ‘ Don’t talk of breakfasting, I will have you go this instant; I am distracted to think where I am.’

Betty. ‘ Dear madam, I beg you will not put yourself into such a hurry of spirits, it seems Leander is gone abroad; and these gay gentlemen, when once they go out, seldom return all day:—I will engage your ladyship shall be removed before he knows any thing of your being here.’

Cleora. ‘ You talk like a fool;—as he went out so early, he is the more likely to come home to dress,—therefore get away,—I would not have him see me here for the world.’

Betty, finding her lady so resolute, made no farther delays, but went into the next room, and huddled on her capuchin and gloves, which done, she returned, and asked what part of the town would be most agreeable to her;—to which Cleora replied,—that all situations were alike to her; but she should chuse some one or other of the streets that turned out of the Strand, as she must be private for a while, and had fewest acquaintance that way;—and then bid her send Mrs. Clip to her. The maid went out, and Mrs. Clip enter’d the room presently after;—Cleora told her the circum-

circumstances of her affairs laid her under a necessity of removing from her house, and intreated she would not make mention of her having been there to any one who might enquire for her;---the other expressed a good deal of concern for losing so good a lodger, and assured her of observing secrecy in the point she desired.

While they were talking, a loud knocking at the door made Mrs. Clip run to the parlour window, and seeing who it was, cry'd out, ' Bless me! 'tis ' Leander,—his cloaths are all bloody, and his ' arm in a scarf! —he has been fighting, that's ' certain! I thought there was some such thing ' in hand, by his going out so early this morning: ' —I beg your ladyship's pardon, I must run and ' see if he wants any thing I can do for him.'

Cleora was too much confounded at the name of Leander, and the condition she heard he was in, to offer to detain her, and after she was gone, fell into a profound reverie, which held her for half an hour; and perhaps might have done so longer, if she had not been roused from it by a gentle knocking at the parlour-door;—but how greatly was she surprized, when on her calling to the person to come in, she saw Leander enter;—she started, trembled, and with a faltering voice spoke thus to him :

Cleora. ' Oh, sir, a visit from you is wholly ' improper at this time! '

Leander. ' I hope not so, madam; since I would ' not have so far intruded, but to acquaint you ' with something which it may be convenient for ' you to know—I have seen your husband this ' morning.'

Cleora. ‘ Oh my foreboding heart! — I dread
to ask the consequence of such a meeting!’

Leander. ‘ You need not, madam; — Aristus
is unhurt, and I bear only one slight token of
his intent to take my life.’

Cleora. ‘ Then you have fought?’

Leander. ‘ It was with the utmost regret I drew
my sword against the husband of Cleora; — but
be pleased, madam, to peruse this billet, and you
will see the necessity that compell’d me to it.’

With these words he presented to her the challenge he had received the night before from Aristus; which, as soon as she had look’d over, she returned to him again, — saying,

Cleora. ‘ Unjust Aristus! — but I thank Heaven nothing worse has ensued!’

Leander. ‘ Heaven, madam, has indeed alone
the praise; since it was not to any superior skill
of mine, or to any generosity in my antagonist,
that I am indebted for my preservation, but to
a kind of miracle.’

Cleora. ‘ As how? — pray, sir, inform me.’

Leander. ‘ I know not, madam, whether I can
make you sensible how the thing happened, as
your sex are ignorant of the terms made use of
in the description of such encounters; — but I
will do my best: — When first we met, I
would have endeavour’d to reason him out of a
mistake so injurious to you and his own peace
of mind, as well as to myself; but he refused
to listen to any arguments I had prepared, and
flew upon me with the rage of an incensed lion:
— by the manner of his fighting, I easily per-
ceived he came with a resolution either to kill
or be killed: — so I was desirous of avoiding
both the one and the other; I only stood upon
‘ my

‘ my defence, and parry’d the pushes he made, tho’
 ‘ in aiming at my breast he several times exposed
 ‘ his own:—the moderation I observed but en-
 ‘ raged him the more, he attempted to close
 ‘ with me, and in that action I received a wound
 ‘ in my right arm a little above the bend, which
 ‘ hindering me from making any use of that wrist,
 ‘ I shifted my sword into the other hand, saying to
 ‘ him at the same time, —‘ You see, sir, I am dis-
 ‘ abled,—we must leave the decision of this affair
 ‘ till some other time.’—‘ No, cried he, I am not
 ‘ so weak as to lose the advantage I have gained.’
 ‘ On this he retreated some paces, and then re-
 ‘ doubling his attacks, the awkward opposition I
 ‘ could now make would not have protected me one
 ‘ moment longer, if in the very crisis of my fate,
 ‘ when the point of his weapon was just ready to
 ‘ transfix me to the earth, we had not fortunately
 ‘ been separated:—some people, whose windows
 ‘ had a prospect of the Artillery-ground, saw the
 ‘ first of our engagement, and making all the haste
 ‘ they could to prevent the threatened mischief,
 ‘ arrived in the instant I have mentioned, beat
 ‘ down the sword of Aristus, and placed themselves
 ‘ before me as a shield.’

Cleora. ‘ Pray, sir, what then did Aristus do?’

Leander. ‘ Walk’d sullenly away, pursued by
 ‘ the reproaches of my deliverers ’till he was out of
 ‘ hearing; and it was with much ado that I pre-
 ‘ vail’d with them to offer him no farther insults.
 ‘ —But, madam, while I am giving you the his-
 ‘ tory of my ill treatment, I fear it is in your
 ‘ power to present me with a more shocking de-
 ‘ tail of the cause that brought you hither.’

Cleora. ‘ It is such a one, indeed, as, if the world
 ‘ be not as unjust as Aristus, will easily absolve me
 ‘ for the resolution I have taken of never living
 ‘ with him more:—but it would happen very

• unlucky for my reputation, should it be-known
 • I have seen you even this once; I therefore in-
 • treat, that after I go hence, you will not think
 • of making me any future visits.'

Leander. Tho' it is hard to suffer for the faults
 • of another, yet, madam, be assured I shall never
 • desire any thing that may give Aristus a pretence
 • for his ill treatment: — I flatter myself, how-
 • ever, that the remembrance of our former ten-
 • derness is not so totally obliterated, but that friend-
 • ship may subsist between us; — you may, at
 • least, permit me to write to you sometimes.'

Cleora. ' I know not whether even that would
 • not be too much.'

Leander. ' Neither virtue, nor duty to the best
 • of husbands, could set down as a fault the favour
 • I request; and to prevent all misinterpretations
 • of our innocent correspondence, I shall take such
 • precautions as will keep it a secret from all the
 • world.'

Cleora. ' Well, sir, I cannot refuse this proof of
 • your compassion for me, and think I ought not
 • to deprive myself of any innocent consolation
 • under my present affliction; — you may therefore
 • be assured that I shall receive, and answer your
 • letters, with all the satisfaction a woman in my
 • circumstances either can or ought to feel.'

He was going to make some reply, when Betty
 returned from her errand; — she was a little sur-
 prised at seeing him there, and said nothing till
 her lady, impatient to know the success of what
 she had been about, spoke thus to her:

Cleora. ' Well, Betty, have you done the
 • business I sent you on?'

Betty. ' Yes, madam, — please to step into the
 • next room, and I will give you an account.'

Cleora.

Cleora. ‘ No, you may tell me here,—I dare trust this gentleman’s discretion.’

The maid then inform’d her that she had agreed for lodgings at the house of a great taylor, whom she named, in Norfolk-street:—On this Cleora desired Leander to retire, saying she must get herself ready, for she was determined to depart immediately.—He offered not to oppose her design; but tho’ the leave they took of each other was now accompanied with the greatest respect on his side, and reserve on her’s, I could easily perceive that this interview had rekindled in both their hearts those flames of affection they before had felt. After he had left the room, Cleora’s things not having been unpacked, there needed little preparation for her going;—she sent for Mrs. Clip, and made her a handsome present for the trouble she had given her house; but finding her a tattling woman, acquainted her not with that to which she was removing:—I saw both the mistress and maid, with all their luggage, depart in the same manner they had come; but did not accompany them to their new habitation, as I could not promise myself with finding any thing there as yet worthy of my enquiry. The discourse of the town afterwards informed me, that Cleora had employed a lawyer, and was soliciting either to have her whole fortune returned, or an annual allowance to the amount of the interest of it:—Aristus was at first refractory to all proposals of this nature; but all his friends, and his mother in particular, joining their persuasions, he at last was prevailed on to sign articles of a final separation; by which it was agreed that she should have a pension of three hundred pounds a year during his life, and in case he died before her, her whole fortune restored.

I frequently call'd upon Cleora, and found, that during this negociation with her husband, she kept her resolution of not seeing Leander; but that affair was no sooner over, than he visited her every day, —the consequence of which may easily be guess'd at, and was in a short time proved; for they went to Paris together, and still continue to reside there. This last action of Cleora's has doubtless given the world room to believe she had not been wrong'd by the suspicions of Aristus; but whoever is of this opinion does her a great deal of injustice; — the Invisible Spy is a witness for her, that her inclinations were virtuous, — her disposition grateful and sincere,—and, had she been treated with that confidence a good wife ought to have been, no temptation would have had the power to have made her otherwise: — let all husbands, therefore, beware how they provoke, by ill usage and distrust, the fate they would avoid; — and observe this maxim of the poet's:

He that would keep the fair-one true and kind,
By love must clap a padlock on her mind.



C H A P. IV.

Presents a full View of the much celebrated Sabina, in an impartial Description of her Person and Character, with some Particulars in relation to her two Amours, and the Consequences which attended an Affignation with her favourite Youngly.

THAT children do not always behave in the same manner with their parents, is not so much owing to their being born with different propensities, as to their education, and the company they may happen to fall into at an age when nature is most liable

liable to be sway'd by example. We often see the most virtuous couples unhappy in a degenerate offspring; but we rarely see good branches sprout from a vicious stock: — an evil disposition may be corrected by advice, by persuasion, by example, and a good one perverted by the same means; but when a person is so unfortunate as to be descended from base and wicked parents, is brought up under them, is witness of all their actions, and has companions of the same cast, it is scarce possible that such a one can have a mind enriched with any noble or moral principles.

What other could the once doating deceived Germanicus expect in his marriage with Sabina, than the vexations he has fatally experienced? — Can all the beauties of her person now make atonement for the blemishes of her mind? — No; — he rather curses than admires those charms that drew him in, and wishes himself any thing, so he were not a husband. Yet ask him why he married, he will tell you he married a woman of fortune, quality, and an uncommon share of beauty. — All this is true; but a man not blinded by passion would have examined by what means the two former were obtained; and, above all, what sort of disposition was hid beneath the varnish of an outside loveliness. Was not her family amongst the lowest rank, till one of them raised himself to opulence by actions which ought to have brought him to a gibbet, and instead of ennobling his posterity, entailed on them perpetual infamy? — Was she not trained up under a mother, whose bad conduct has been equally notorious? — Was she not from her most early years soothed in every vanity, pampered in every luxury, and taught to think that appetites and passions were never given but to be indulged?

Could Germanicus be ignorant of these glaring truths? — If he were not, yet rashly ventured on so unpromising a union, who can pity the misfortunes, the disquiets, the disgrace, it has involved him in? The many proofs she gave of too warm an inclination before marriage, as also several of the many amours she had after she became a wife, I shall pass over; the first that made any great noise was that with Miramour, perhaps owing to the manner of its commencement, which he thinking himself under no obligation to conceal, has since made no secret of in all companies, whenever her name comes upon the carpet.

This gentleman had a mistress, who, on account of a certain haughtiness in her temper and behaviour, he call'd Roxana; — he supported her in so genteel a manner, that had her reputation been equal to her appearance, she might have been entitled to the best company. — Character, however, was the least thing considered by Sabina in the choice of her acquaintance; — she accidentally met with this lady at a milliner's, fell into discourse with her, liked her, invited her to her house, and there soon grew a great intimacy between them. That Roxana was kept by Miramour was no secret to the town, nor did she attempt to make any of it to Sabina; — on the contrary, she talked freely to her of their amorous correspondence; but how dangerous it is for one woman to boast too much of the perfections of her lover, to another no less sanguine in her constitution! — Sabina, who had often seen Miramour without taking any notice of him, now became so fired with the rapturous description given of him by his mistress, that she instantly became her rival, and languish'd to experience in reality that happiness which the other had given her so high an idea of. As she never took any thing of this nature

nature into her head without attempting to accomplish it, and had no regard to decorum in the manner of her doing so, she sent a billet to him by a porter containing these lines :

‘ SIR,

‘ IF your attachment to the charms of your
‘ kept mistress makes you not look on the rest of
‘ womankind as insipid creatures, the invitation
‘ this brings you will not be unwelcome :—a wo-
‘ man of quality, young, and in most men’s eyes
‘ handsome, has found something in you that ex-
‘ cites in her the desire of a private interview, and
‘ to that end will call on you this evening about
‘ seven at White’s ;—till when must remain, with
‘ a great deal of impatience,

‘ Your INCOGNITA.’

The messenger who carried this had strict orders not to tell from whom it came :—curiosity, however, for it could be call’d no other passion as yet, made Miramour punctual to the time, nor was Sabina less so ; — he had not waited many minutes before she came ; — on his coming into the coach he found her face entirely hid under her hood, which she told him laughing, he must not expect to see till they were in a place more proper for him to give her proof how agreeable it was to him ; on this he order’d the coachman to drive to an adjacent tavern, where being shewn into a private room, the lady soon threw off her disguise. He had not enough depended on the character she had given of herself, not to be surprised and transported on finding Sabina in the person of his Inconnita ; and expressed the sense he had of the honour she did him, and the happiness he hoped their meeting would bestow on him, in terms so warm,
and

and so passionate, as infinitely charmed her. They passed some hours together to their mutual satisfaction, nor parted without an appointment to see each other the next day; but Sabina, not thinking it safe to come often to so public a place as a tavern, undertook to provide a more proper scene for the continuance of their intrigue.

As indolent as this lady is in most other affairs, it must be confessed that no woman was ever more punctual, or more indefatigable, in every thing relating to love.—On consulting with a female acquaintance, who had been often necessary on such occasions, she was advised by her to hire a private lodging by the quarter, in some obscure nook of the town, to which she might retire whenever she had a mind, as it would be always ready, and neither herself nor the friends she should bring with her be taken any notice of. Sabina highly approving of what she said, the project was put in immediate execution: — the woman took upon herself the accomplishment of what she had proposed, and easily found a place every way suitable for the business it was designed; — the chamber was neat, spacious, and well furnished; — there was a back-door to the house, through which any one might slip out in case of any danger of discovery; and the landlady knew perfectly well the decorum she ought to observe in regard to her guests: — the heroine of this adventure was very much pleased with the accommodation procured for her; — and having got this recess, which, according to the French, she used to call her *Petite Maison*, henceforward never met Miramour at any other place.

But there was one thing I forgot to mention in giving the character of this lady, which is the uncertainty of her temper: — she is no less inconstant than

than she is amorous, and changes her lovers almost as often as she does her cloaths, and never keeps either till they are worn out ; a new friend, like a new fashion, is always charming to her ; but a very little time serves to make her grow equally weary of both. She loved Miramour till she saw Youngly ; but there was something in the person and conversation of this gentleman, that making reason coincide with passion, it is not to be wondered at that she gave him the preference ; and a woman of a less mutable disposition might have been easily absolved for transferring her affections to an object so much more worthy than the late engrosser of her heart.

On her first appearance with him, she made advances to him, which he is too much a man of pleasure to resist from any fine woman ; — he returned those of Sabina in a manner which made her think him as much devoted to her as she could wish ; and it was not long before she gave him an invitation to drink tea with her at her private apartment, where she told him they might laugh away an hour without interruption. He took the hint, and flew to the place of rendezvous, where it was not to be doubted but he found all the welcome he could wish or expect from the obliging fair. They had many interviews, but Youngly having by some accident heard of her intrigue with Miramour, he not only frequently reproached her with it, but also was far from feeling for her that affection in his heart, which otherwise her beauty might have inspired him with.

In the mean time Roxana, who, from the commencement of Miramour's acquaintance with Sabina, had seen him less often than she had been accustomed, and had also some other reasons to suspect

pect a decrease of affection, began presently to imagine some new face had supplanted her ; — she complained to him of his unkindness, but he absolutely denied having given her any cause, and made a thousand excuses for his late behaviour : — but this did not satisfy her ; — she was not to be deceived in matters of which she was so good a judge, and convinced that she had a rival, bent her whole thoughts on discovering the person. By an emissary whom she employed to watch Miramour wherever he went, she soon found out the place where she met the object of his new attachment ; but as that lady was carried into the house in a chair, with the curtains close drawn, was still as far as ever from knowing the face that had undone her. Upon enquiry among the neighbours, she was informed that the house was noted for giving reception to people who liked each other more than they were willing the world should know ; and this put a stratagem into her head, which was crown'd with all the success she could wish or hope ; not only for exploring what at present was a mystery to her, but also for being amply revenged on her fair rival.

The mistress of Miramour knew the town long before she knew him, and was not unacquainted with the customs of such houses ; — she went one morning to the governante of this, and after saying that she had been recommended by a person who knew her, told her she should be glad to have a chamber, to which she might sometimes come with a friend, whom it was not convenient for her to see at home : — the old gentlewoman replied, that her best room was rented by the quarter, by a lady who came often thither ; and that the next, which was the only one she had to spare, she fear'd would be too small. — Roxana cry'd, she did not regard how

how small it was, provided it was otherwise commodious;—on this she was shewed up to it, and finding it was divided from the other only by a thin wainscot partition, presently agreed for it, giving the old woman so good a premium in hand, that she was highly satisfied with her new incumbent.

Having accomplished so far of her design as to get possession of the very next room to that where her lover and his new mistress met, she began to consider, that to go thither alone, might raise some suspicions in the women of the house, and was a little at a loss what man she should take with her, and make pass for a gallant, as whoever went, he must be made the confidante of the whole affair;—at last she pitched upon the fellow she had employed as a spy upon Miramour.—His appearance, indeed, was very mean; but that she thought might not be regarded. Accordingly she went the next day, accompanied by her pretended gallant;—they were there some time before the hour in which he had told her he had seen Miramour go in, in order to prepare things for a more perfect discovery:—this was done by the young fellow's boring holes thro' the wainscoat in so dextrous a manner, that they could see all over the room without being seen themselves, though they stood close to the orifice:—no one, however, came that night, and the impatient Roxana was obliged to return home as dissatisfied as ever.

The next day she repair'd thither again, attended as before, and met with the same disappointment; but on the third was more successful:—she had not been many minutes in the chamber, when a rustling of silks upon the stairs made her know somebody was coming up, on which she ran hastily, without making any noise, to one of the peep-

peep-holes ; — but how great was her astonishment, when she saw Sabina enter !—Scarce could she refrain exclaiming aloud against the treachery of a woman, who, after being made her confidante, had robb'd her of the affections of her lover. But soon the current of her passion turn'd a different way, when, instead of Miramour, she saw Youngly push open the door, and throw himself into Sabina's arms ; on which, withdrawing from her post,

‘ You fool, cried she to her emissary, to what a fruitless labour have you exposed me !—It is not Miramour that I have all this while païd you for following.—How could you be so mope-eyed as to mistake him ?’ ‘ Nay, madam, replied the fellow, I am sure I know Mr. Miramour, and I will swear that it was him I saw come into this house, and presently after a lady in a chair, as I then told you.’ Roxana knew not what to think of this, and said no more ; but listening attentively to the conversation within, was presently assured by it, that her agent had neither deceived her, nor had been deceived himself, as will appear by the following dialogue :

Sabina. ‘ My dear, dear Youngly, I hope you will now believe that I love you above all the world.’

Youngly. ‘ I know you love me enough to make me happy, and I ought to content myself with the share I have in your affections.’

Sabina. ‘ Do not talk of a share ;—by Heaven you engross me all ! — my soul and all its faculties are devoted to you.’

Youngly. ‘ And yet the letter Miramour accidentally dropp'd in the Park, and I took up, flatt'erd him with the same assurances you now give me.’

Sabina.

Sabina. ‘ As I unfortunately play’d the fool with him before I saw you, it was necessary I should break with him by degrees.’

Youngly. ‘ You had once, however, a real passion for him.’

Sabina. ‘ No, it was all in imagination ; — I once fancied I lov’d him : — you must know, that silly vain creature, his kept mistress, was always filling my ears with stories of the violence of his affection for her ; and it was more to shew him the difference between such a wretch and a woman of quality, than any extraordinary liking I had to his person, that induced me to grant him the favours I did.’

This was enough to let the listening Roxana into the whole affair : — it was with much ado she restrained herself from flying into the next room, and returning the contempt thrown upon her by the last words of Sabina ; but just as she was at the door, and ready to burst in on the unsuspecting pair, a sudden thought made her turn back, — ‘ All I can say to this perfidious woman, cry’d she to herself, will avail me nothing : — the wrongs I have receiv’d demand a vengeance more complete.’ She then sat down again, and calmly meditating on what she had to do, the fertility of her invention soon supplied her with the means of repaying, with interest, the double affront Sabina had given both to herself and Miramour, whom it is certain she loved with more sincerity than is commonly found among women of her profession. She staid ’till the lovers took their leaves of each other, and heard an appointment made between them to meet again on the ensuing Thursday.

Having fully perfected in her mind the design she soon after put in execution, she call’d for the woman

woman of the house, and said to her,—‘ Madam, ‘ I know not but some gentlemen may pass an ‘ hour or two with me here next Thursday,—they ‘ may possibly come before me, but desire you ‘ will give them admittance; and to prevent ‘ mistakes, as the furniture of the room is yellow, ‘ they shall ask for the key of the yellow chamber.’ —The other reply’d, that she might depend on her punctuality in observing her commands; after which Roxana went away; but what she meant by the orders she had given must be left to the next chapter to explain.



C H A P. V.

Contains the Catastrophe of an Adventure, which the Author thinks fit to declare is inserted in these Lubcubrations less to amuse his Reader than for the sake of setting in a true Light those Facts which some People have artfully endeavoured to misrepresent to the Public.

ROXANA being now fully furnished with materials for her revenge on Sabina, without exposing her beloved Miramour to the resentment of an injured husband, wrote to the latter the next morning in words to this effect:

To GERMANICUS.

‘ SIR,

‘ THIS brings you a very ungrateful piece of intelligence; — but in my opinion, whoever sees a person wrong’d and conceals it, takes part in the offence, and tho’ innocent of the commencement of the crime, is accessory to the continuance of it; — it would certainly be the utmost injustice that you should be the last person

‘ to

‘ to know what concerns yourself alone, and I therefore think it my duty to inform you of what chance has discovered to me. Your wife, sir, is false to your bed, and lavishes on Mr. Youngly all those favours which you have a right to enjoy gross ; — the guilty pair meet twice or thrice every week, at a lodging she rents by the quarter for that purpose. — But to say your wife is guilty of so foul a crime is doing nothing, without putting it in your power to prove her so ; — the thing is easy, sir, if you will follow my directions : — The lovers have appointed to meet tomorrow about seven at their usual rendezvous ; — if you go at that time, or rather before it, to the third house on the left hand in **** lane, on your asking Mrs. *****, who is the keeper of this private brothel, and telling her you want the key of the yellow chamber, she will presently conduct you to a room adjoining to that which is the scene of your wife’s loose pleasures ; — there are holes already bored through the wainscot, through which you may plainly discern all that passes. — It is at your own option, whether you will have any other witnesses of your wife’s transgression than your own eyes, and also how to behave towards her after detection. — I have discharged the dictates of my conscience in giving you this information, and am, sir,

‘ Your unknown friend.

‘ P. S. Be careful to drop no words that may give the woman of the house the least cause to suspect either who you are, or the motive of your coming.’

It is convenient I should now acquaint my reader, that all I have hitherto related of this story has come to my knowledge entirely by the report of the persons chiefly concerned in it, and without

the

the least assistance from my Belt of Invisibility ;— what yet remains to be told I have the testimony of my own eyes and ears to avouch. — The many odd accounts I have heard, from time to time, in relation to Sabina's conduct, made me resolve to go one day to the house of Germanicus, in order to satisfy my curiosity with seeing in what manner this couple behaved to each other.

The lady was abroad when I came, and I found him up in his dining-room, diverting himself with playing on the flute ; but soon after roused from that amusement by the above letter being deliver'd to him by his man, saying, it was brought by a fellow who the moment he had put it into his hand vanish'd like lightning from the door. — The emotions with which he read it were very great, yet much less than might have been expected on such an occasion ; — he paused, — then read again — examined every line with heedful eyes, and seemed extremely divided in his thoughts what credit he should give to the information ; — at last said he to himself, — ‘ If any one had form'd this contrivance through a malicious design of ruining her reputation, or my peace of mind, they would certainly have taken other methods, and not by pointing out the place, the hour, put it in my power to prove at once the falseness of the accusation.’

After this he threw himself into an easy chair, lean'd his head upon his hand, and in that posture continued musing for a considerable time ; — then seeming more resolved, started up and cry'd : — ‘ It is easy for me to make enquiry if there be such a house, — if kept by a woman of the name mentioned in the letter, and what character it bears. --- Yet why should I do this ? --- No, it is better to follow the instructions given me, and be at once assured ; --- it shall be so ; --- as Shakespeare makes Othello say,

I'll

I'll see before I doubt ; when I doubt, prove ;
 And on the proof there is no more but this ;
 Away at once with love or jealousy.

He had scarce done repeating these lines, when Sabina came in singing an Italian air ; --- Germanicus endeavoured to recompose his countenance ; but could not do it so well as not to make her take notice of the change, and ask if he were out of humour ; --- to which he reply'd :

Germanicus. ‘ Out of humour, madam ? --- no, --- I have no cause, --- none in the world.’

Sabina. ‘ I think not, indeed ; but men will be peevish sometimes, cause or not cause.’

Germanicus. ‘ I reserve all my gaiety for to-morrow, and would have you do so too ; a kinsman of mine makes an entertainment, and has sent an invitation for us to be partakers of it.’

Sabina. ‘ What, to-morrow ?’

Germanicus. ‘ Yes, my dear, to morrow evening : --- so I desire you will not engage yourself elsewhere.’

Sabina. ‘ Indeed I have engaged myself already to lady Gape's assembly.’

Germanicus. ‘ You have time enough then to send to excuse yourself from going.’

Sabina. ‘ Indeed I shall not ; — I would not disappoint my dear lady Gape for all the kinsmen in the world ; but I would have you go ; — you may say I am not well, and then my absence cannot be taken amiss.’

It was very plain to me, that Germanicus made this pretended invitation only as a trap to discover whether she had really an engagement on her hands that she would not be willing to break ; and it is also as little to be doubted, but that her answers very much corroborated the contents of the epistle

he

he had just received. — He forced himself, however, to tell her with a smile, that every thing should be as she would have it, and that he would no farther press her. — Some company presently after coming in, I found there was nothing more to be learned at that time, so took the first opportunity of quitting the house ; and went again the next afternoon, in hopes of discovering something more.

On my arrival, the husband and wife were sitting together in the most seeming amicable manner ;—after some little time Germanicus rose up and put on his hat and sword, in order, as he said, to go to his kinsman ; on which Sabina, with a great deal of complaisance, said to him :

Sabina. ‘ You will not walk sure, my dear ;
‘ —Have you ordered the horses to be put to ?’

Germanicus. ‘ No, my dear ; I leave the coach
‘ for you.’

Sabina. ‘ There is no occasion,—I always
‘ chuse to go to these places in a chair.’

Germanicus. ‘ That is as you please ;—but I
‘ shall walk, as I have three or four places to call
‘ at in my way to my cousin’s ; so farewell, my
‘ dear, I hope you will be as merry at the assembly,
‘ as I hope to be at the entertainment.’

As I imagin’d Germanicus had something in his head more than I knew of, by his being so hasty to be gone, I followed him close at his heels, and found I had not been mistaken in my supposition ; — he went into a tavern, where two gentlemen, whom he had desired to meet him there, waited for him ;—the business he had with them was to communicate the letter he had received from the unknown friend ; and after having consider’d a little

little on the matter, they both agreed they should all three go together, not only to prevent any indiscreet effects of his rage on the persons who wrong'd him, in case the affair should prove as the letter had represented ; but also to be his witnesses, if he thought proper to bring it before a court of judicature. They staid 'till a little before seven,—then went, according to the directions given by Roxana, and found every thing answer'd the description :—they were shew'd up into the yellow chamber ;—I still accompanied them, and made a fourth person, unfelt, as well as unseen by any of them.

They had not been there above half an hour before Sabina came into the next room :—Youngly soon after joined her ; and the much-injured husband and his two friends saw enough, from the peep-holes in the partition, to convince them of the truth of that information which had brought them thither. Difficult was it for Germanicus to restrain his fury on so shocking a spectacle ; but his two friends reminding him that there was a much better way for him to shew his resentment, he was at length prevail'd on to retire.—They both went home with him, as did myself, resolving to see what farther events this night would produce.—Sabina came not home till near two hours past midnight ;—but Germanicus had order'd that the door should not be opened ; and after her chairman had knock'd two or three times, he went himself to the parlour window, and spoke to her in these terms :

Germanicus. ‘ Please, madam, to return from whence you came, or wherever else you shall think proper ; my house shall no longer be the shelter of a prostitute.’

Sabina. ‘ What ! is the man mad ?—Sure you have been drinking bad wine to-night.’

Germanicus. ‘ No, madam, the best I ever drank
‘ in my life:—it has open’d my eyes, and shew’d
‘ me the viper I so long cherish’d in my bosom,
‘ and now throw off for ever:—but I would not
‘ wish you to stay longer in the cold,—you can
‘ have no entrance here: — Mr. Youngly will
‘ doubtless afford you a part of his bed.’

With these words he shut the window; and Sabina, finding herself detected, and that her husband was resolute, order’d her chair from the door; and after some little consideration how to dispose of herself, thought it best to take her husband’s advice, and return to the place from whence she came, as it was the only asylum to which she could have recourse at so unseasonable an hour.

In the several visits I afterwards made to Germanicus, I perceived he behaved with much more moderation than some husbands would have done: — philosophy had taught him to support with patience a misfortune which was irremediable: — he contented himself with taking such revenge as the laws of England have provided in these cases: — Youngly was summoned before a court of judicature, and a penalty inflicted on him for his offence; but it would have been larger, had it not been proved, by incontestable evidences, that he had not been the first who had seduced Sabina from her marriage vows. — As for the lady, she is now abandoned and despised by both her lovers; and if there be a possibility that any thing can bring her to a just sense of the faults she has been guilty of, it must be the contempt she is treated with by all degrees of people.

END of the THIRD BOOK.



THE INVISIBLE SPY.



BOOK IV.

CHAP. I.

In which the Author confesses having been guilty of Petty Larceny ; but hopes that it merits Forgiveness from those into whose Hands this Work may fall, as the chief Motive for committing it was to oblige the Public.

HAVE been intimately acquainted with Belinda for a considerable time in my visible capacity, yet never once took it into my head to make her a visit under the cover of my Belt till her return from Bath this last season ; nor perhaps had done it then, if I had not been told that she suffer'd herself to be conducted to that place by a certain gentleman, whom I thought it highly improper for her to continue any conversation with, as he was a married man, and the same Philander hereafter mentioned in some of Selima's letters. On my entering her apartment, I found her busy with her waiting-maid in unpacking her

baggage, which coming by the waggon, it seems, had arrived in town but the night before. As I could promise myself but little entertainment from the assortment of ribbands, jewels, &c. I was thinking to quit the place, and return at a more fit season, when the maid, pulling out a sattin bag full of papers, ask'd her lady where she would have those writings laid ; on which Belinda turn'd her head that way, and reply'd, ‘ They are a heap ‘ of letters I received at Bath, of no manner of con- ‘ sequence ;—I have no room for such rubbish ;— ‘ take them and throw them all into the fire.’

The maid was just going to do as she was bid, but was stopped by Belinda, who suddenly scream'd out : ‘ Hold ! hold !—I had forgot that one day, ‘ in a hurry, I stuff'd two or three letters and ‘ poems of Philander's among them ; and I would ‘ not have one line of that dear witty creature's ‘ destroy'd for all the world :—pour them all out ‘ of the bag, and look on the names subscrib'd, that ‘ I may direct you how to separate the wheat from ‘ the chaff.’ The maid then threw them all down upon the carpet, and open'd them one by one ; which done, Belinda added, ‘ You need search no ‘ farther,—I have found all Philander's letters and ‘ poems in this drawer, so cram together all you ‘ have there, and thrust them into the fire.’ This sentence was punctually executed, according to the best of the maid's belief ; but the poor girl knew not there was an Invisible Thief, who stood close at her elbow, and while she turned her head another way, had the dexterity to preserve some part of the condemn'd cargoes, and slip it into his pocket.

Selima at that time engrossed great part of the conversation in town :—she was a young woman of no fortune, and few other endowments besides
her

her beauty, of which, in the opinion of most people, she has an uncommon share; though to me there is a certain fierceness in her eyes, and a boldness diffused through all her features, which rob them of that loveliness they would otherwise have.

— Such as she is, however, she captivated the hearts of two persons, who might have carried their addresses much higher without danger of a refusal: the one is born to a title, and the other possessed of wealth, which, whenever he pleases, may procure him one; and neither of them can be thought deficient in any of those qualifications which constitute the fine gentleman:—yet Selima was still unmarried;—both her lovers were equally in suspense, and nobody could tell which, or whether either of them would be the happy man. It is not therefore to be wondered at, that a person of my humour should be extremely desirous of being let into a secret which seem'd so impenetrable, even to those who pretended to be most knowing in other things; nor that I gladly embraced an opportunity which bids so fair for the satisfaction of my curiosity, as the getting her letters into my possession, Belinda having said they contained the whole history of this affair.

Behold now my theft:—Belinda's maid had no sooner laid down the packet, by her lady's orders, than I kept my eye constantly fixed upon it, till a convenient moment offer'd for conveying it from among the others, which I did with great adroitness: after this, I staid no longer with Belinda, not doubting but I had now about me better materials for my entertainment than any I could expect to be furnished with in her apartment, at least for the present.

The distance between Belinda's lodgings and my own seem'd now to be twice as long as usual, tho' I believe I measured much fewer paces than ever I had done before, so great was my impatience to be at home, and examine the treasure I brought with me. To avoid confusion, I examined the dates of every letter, and shall present them to my readers in the order they were sent to her while at Bath.

LETTER I.

Dear BELINDA,

' I Received the favour of yours with a double satisfaction ; first, as it brought me news of your safe arrival at that agreeable place, and that every thing in it answered your wishes and expectations ;—and secondly,—as it assures me of your friendship, by the kind concern you are pleased to express for my welfare. As to my health, I have quite lost that ugly cough, which so much persecuted me when you left London ;—but as to my affairs, they are still in the same fluctuating and unsettled condition as ever :—Dorantes continues his addresses, Vanucius does the same.—How happy might I be if I was loved but by one of them ! — but both equally pursuing me, impedes all the good fortune I might enjoy with either.

' You may remember how much my mamma was transported when Dorantes first declared himself my lover :—Vanucius, though not quite dropp'd, was then little regarded either by myself or her ;—but now the case is altered — she charges me to treat both with an equal freedom ; and, indeed, I think it would be highly impolitic to do otherwise. The truth is, Dorantes does not come so directly to the point as could be wished :—his courtship is passionate, tender, and

‘ and full of fire : — he swears I am the idol of his
 ‘ soul, — that he could not live without me. —
 ‘ and that all his hopes are center’d in being one
 ‘ day happy in possessing me ; yet, among all these
 ‘ fine speeches, he seldom mentions marriage : and
 ‘ when he does, it is in so flight and evasive a man-
 ‘ ner, as gives me sometimes cause to fear his de-
 ‘ signs are rather on my heart than hand. If this
 ‘ should be his intention, and I were weak enough
 ‘ to have fixed my affection on him, how miserable
 ‘ should I be ! — but thank Heaven, I have none of
 ‘ that soft folly in my composition, by which I have
 ‘ seen so many of our sex misled : — My ruling
 ‘ passions are interest and ambition ; and I would
 ‘ not hesitate one moment to give myself to Va-
 ‘ nucius, if the rank and title of Dorantes did
 ‘ not tempt me to wait awhile the result of his
 ‘ pretensions.

‘ I was yesterday morning in the Mall with Va-
 ‘ nucius ; Dorantes was walking there with some
 ‘ company ; — he changed colour, and seemed in
 ‘ some agitation on meeting us together : — this I
 ‘ looked upon as a good sign ; but in the afternoon
 ‘ when he came to visit me, and I expected he
 ‘ would either have complained of my indifference
 ‘ to him, or reproached me for the public encou-
 ‘ rage ment I had given his rival ; he did neither,
 ‘ but behaved the whole time with all the calm-
 ‘ ness and insensibility of a stoic. I must confess
 ‘ I was never more disappointed in all my life, as
 ‘ I had seen him frequently kindle into jealousy on
 ‘ a less occasion, and could not help thinking, that
 ‘ the violence of his passion was, in a great mea-
 ‘ sure, abated, — according to this maxim of Mr.
 ‘ Dryden :

“ Distrust in lovers is too warm a fun :
 “ But yet ’tis night in love when that is gone.”

‘ On consulting with my mamma, I found she was of the same way of thinking, and it was agreed upon between us, not to suffer ourselves to be trifled with any longer, but that the next time Vanucius made an offer of his hand, I should accept it. But, my dear Belinda, this morning has put a stop to the resolution of last night;—I was scarce out of bed, when I received from Dorantes the most passionate billet that ever was dictated by the heart of man, occasioned, as he says, by dreaming he had me in his arms:—if his love be half so impatient to have me there as he pretends it is, he will certainly be now more pressing to make me his own than hitherto he has been.

‘ My next, perhaps, may bring you the decision of my fate;—mean time I should be glad to hear what is doing at Bath, and what new conquests you have made there; for how much soever you may be envied by some of your acquaintance, be assured that every thing that contributes to your satisfaction will always afford a secret pleasure to her, who is, with the most perfect amity, &c.

‘ SELIMA.’

LETTER II.

‘ Dear BELINDA,

‘ I AM sorry to tell you, that the perplexity of my own affairs has hindered me from being inquisitive enough into those of other people, for me to be able to send you the intelligence you request; but as I flatter myself, that what regards myself will be always most interesting to you, I shall give you a brief detail of what has happen’d to me in relation to Dorantes, since his last kind letter mention’d in my former.

He

‘ He came the same evening ; — the discourse he entertain’d me with was of a piece with his epistle, — all love and transport : — he begg’d I would favour him with my company to the Theatre in Drury-Lane, where he had already sent a servant to keep places in the box : — I consented, and went with him in his chariot ; — the play was Romeo and Juliet : — he applied all the tender things spoke by the former of these lovers to his own passion, and press’d my hand with vehemence of fondness, whenever he had an opportunity of doing so unperceived by the audience.

‘ I saw him again next day ; — we were alone together in the dining-room, and my gown being a little more off my shoulder than ordinary, he laid his face upon my bare neck, crying, “ Oh ! I could dwell for ever here ! ” — On this I took courage to say to him, — “ Yet, Dorantes, when once I become your wife, these ardours will perhaps sink into a cold indifference.” — “ No, my angel ! return’d he, desire will rather increase by enjoyment of your person ; — the sweets contain’d in this dear frame are of too divine a nature ever to satiate.” In speaking these words, he catched me suddenly in his arms, held me to his bosom, and joined his lips to mine with some what (I thought) of an unbecoming warmth : — I struggled to get loose, and when I had done so, retired some paces from him, and said with all my haughtiness I could assume, “ Forbear these liberties, sir, till authorised by law to take them.” — He ask’d my pardon, apologiz’d for what he had done by the violence of his passion, and then sat down ; but appeared more than ordinarily pensive afterwards, — spoke little, and made his visit much shorter than usual.’

‘ On my acquainting my mamma with what had
 ‘ passed between us, she did not at all like it, and
 ‘ went directly to her old friend, you know who
 ‘ I mean, to be advised by him how to proceed in a
 ‘ circumstance at once so intricate and critical :—
 ‘ he told her that my father ought to appear in
 ‘ this business ; that it was his place, and his alone,
 ‘ to demand of Dorantes an explanation of his de-
 ‘ signs in regard to the courtship he so long had
 ‘ made to his daughter. My mamma had always
 ‘ been of this opinion, but knowing the indolence
 ‘ of my father’s temper, had forbore mentioning
 ‘ it to him ; however, she urged it to him ; but
 ‘ all she could say or offer has been ineffectual ;
 ‘ —his answer was,— That he did not know
 ‘ how to speak to a person of Dorantes’s quality on
 ‘ any such matter ;— that he would not interfere
 ‘ in it, and we might act as we thought proper
 ‘ ourselves.

‘ This, you will own, is very vexatious ; but
 ‘ there is no turning him out of his own way :—
 ‘ Mamma is now resolved, since there is no other
 ‘ remedy, to take the task upon herself, as soon as
 ‘ Dorantes comes to town ; — he is at present
 ‘ gone on a hunting match with some gentlemen,
 ‘ but is expected to return in two days at farthest,
 ‘ and we shall then see the event. For my part,
 ‘ my spirits are so much fatigued and harrassed with
 ‘ this suspence, that there is but one thing hinders
 ‘ me from putting an immediate end to it by mar-
 ‘ rying with Vanucius ;— the persons of the men
 ‘ are equal to me ; — but oh ! Belinda, I am
 ‘ passionately in love with the title of Dorantes ;—
 ‘ would he were half as much with my person, he
 ‘ would not then delay one moment giving me the
 ‘ one in exchange for the other.

‘ The faithful Vanucius, whom I have flattered
 ‘ with the belief of not being indifferent to me, is
 ‘ every

every day soliciting me to fix a time to make him happy, while Dorantes seems to dally with my expectations :—yet I cannot resolve to reward the constant services of the one, nor to renounce for ever the charming hope of rank, precedence, the thousand dear appendages of a woman of quality, which the other has in his power to bestow on me :—but I will trouble you no farther than to assure you, that in whatever station my fate shall place me, I shall be ever, with the best wishes for your happiness, &c.

‘ SELIMA.’

‘ P. S. I am highly obliged to Philander for the part you tell me he takes in my concerns ;—pray be so good to make my grateful acknowledgments acceptable to him.’

L E T T E R III.

‘ Dear BELINDA,

‘ I WOULD not let this post escape without writing ;—what I have now to say to you, tho’ greatly to the purpose, must be comprised in a few words :—I am engaged to go this evening with Dorantes, and some other company, on a party of pleasure, and am every moment expecting his landau at the door, so can but just snatch time to inform you, that my mamma has talk’d to him on the affair in question,—and that his answers have been conformable to our utmost wishes :—yes, I am now convinced, that all my apprehensions were groundless ;—that he never meant to act otherwise than honourably with me :—he has assured both her and myself, that every thing shall soon be settled for my future happiness :---rejoice with me my dear creature,---I have now

‘ a heart and head perfectly at ease, and nothing to employ my thoughts, but how to behave becoming the dignity to which, I flatter myself, a few days will raise me. Farewel ;—the author of my joys is already come ;—they call me to receive him,—and I can add no more, than that I am, as ever, with unfeigned regard, &c.

‘ SELIMA.’

LETTER IV.

‘ Dear BELINDA,

‘ LITTLE did I expect, and little is it in your power to imagine what I have now to acquaint you with ;—so strange a reverse, so sudden, so shocking a revolution, sure never any woman but myself experienced :—but I will keep you no longer in suspense. I have lost Dorantes, irrecoverably lost him, —not through any mismanagement of my own, nor any want of affection in him, but through a previous, much worse, and more irremediable accident—this is the sum of my misfortunes ;—I will now relate to you the particulars :

‘ He came to me the other day, and though the salutations he approached me with had their custom’d tenderness, yet I thought there was somewhat in his countenance, and the whole air of his deportment, very different from any thing I had ever seen him in before :—he had not been in the room many minutes before he told me, that he had something of consequence to impart to me, and desired I would order myself to be denied to whoever should happen to come.—I readily did as he desired ; after which, he drew his chair close to mine, sigh’d, and looking me full in the face, surprised me with these words :

“ My dear Selima, said he, I have deceiv’d you :
“ — Have you love enough for me to forgive it ? ”
“ First let me know the nature of your offence,”
returned I. “ ‘Tis death to me to declare it,”
answered he ; “ yet can it be no longer hid : — I
“ have imposed upon you by a false pretence ; —
“ promised what is not in my power to perform ;
“ I cannot marry you.”

“ Judge, Belinda, of my confusion ; — but it is
“ as impossible for you to conceive, as it is for me
“ to describe what I felt in that dreadful moment ;
“ — scarce could a thunderbolt have transfix'd me
“ more ; — I had no breath, — no voice, but to
“ echo part of his last words, — “ Cannot marry !
“ —cannot marry ! ” cry’d I : and this I repeated
“ several times over.”

“ He seem’d all this time in very great agitations,
“ and after taking one of my hands, and tenderly
“ pressing it to his lips, — “ Heaven knows, said
“ he, how earnestly I desir’d the union I proposed ;
“ gladly would I resign the one half of those years
“ fate has allotted for my life, to have the other
“ bless’d with the possession of my Selima, in the
“ way she expects from me ; — but, alas ! that
“ hope is vain ; — the fatal secret is this : — I am
“ already married, — my heedless and unwary
“ youth was ensnared to give my hand to a crea-
“ ture, who, though I never did, nor never will
“ live with as a wife, will not, on any considera-
“ tion, be prevailed upon to resign the cursed
“ claim she has to me as a husband.”

“ Overwhelmed as I was with various passions,
“ I at last assumed resolution enough to tell him,
“ that he had acted a most ungenerous and disho-
“ norable part in making his addresses to me,
“ knowing himself under so indissoluble an engage-
“ ment to another. — To which he replied, that
“ at first he hoped to have got quit of his unfortu-

“ nate

• nate tye ;—and that after he found all the offers
• he had made to that end were fruitless, the passion
• he had for me would not suffer him to restrain
• seeing me, conversing with me, and telling me
• how much he adored me. He then made a long
• harangue on the restless power of my charms,
• and the violence of that flame they had inspired
• him with ;—swore a thousand oaths, that the
• world to him had nothing in it but myself worth
• living for ; and concluded with a proposal, that
• since he could not make me his wife, he would
• settle a thousand pounds a year upon me to be his
• mistress ;—and that it should be at my option
• either to live publickly with him as such, or to
• continue with my mamma, and receive his visits
• in a private manner.

‘ This offer I rejected with more disdain than I
• had shewn to any of the like nature which had
• ever been made to me since my first being in the
• way of temptation ;—nor will you wonder that
• I did so :—to be courted for a mistress by
• the very man who had so lately flattered me with
• the hopes of marriage, made me now look upon
• that as an affront, which, before my expecta-
• tions had been raised to the height they had been,
• I might perhaps have taken as a proof of his af-
• fection. I ranted, storm’d, conceal’d no part
• of the spite I was possess’d of ; but all I said
• seem’d to make no great impression on him ;—
• he bore it with a temper which I thought was
• not at all consistent with the violence of the pa-
• sion he had pretended ; and on his going away,
• calmly told me, that he would make the same
• proposal he had done me to no other woman in
• the world ; that it was no inconsiderable one ;—
• and that, as he could do no more, he hoped my
• cooler moments would represent it as a thing
• worthy my attention.

‘ Indeed,

‘ Indeed, my dear Belinda, I was half mad, and
 ‘ believe I gave myself some airs not any way be-
 ‘ coming in me to a man of his quality.—I met
 ‘ him in the Park this morning; but tho’ he was
 ‘ alone, and I had only Flavia with me, he never
 ‘ offered to join us, but pass’d by with a slight bow.
 ‘ —I suppose he resents my behaviour, but it is
 ‘ no matter, since he is married.—Vanucius is now
 ‘ my last resource; — if I could persuade the man
 ‘ to purchase a title, he would be full as agreeable
 ‘ to me as Dorantes; — but he is an unambitious
 ‘ creature, and I almost despair of it; I shall try, at
 ‘ least, how far the love he has for me will pre-
 ‘ vail; — my next will bring you news of what
 ‘ success my endeavours will meet; till when, I
 ‘ am, even in the midst of my perplexity, &c.

‘ SELIMA.’

LETTER V.

‘ Dear BELINDA,

‘ IT is almost a sin to disturb the felicity you
 ‘ enjoy with any melancholy accounts; but fresh
 ‘ calamities will always occasion fresh complaints;
 ‘ and while I am giving you a detail of my misfor-
 ‘ tunes, methinks I am eased of some part of the
 ‘ weight of them: — you may say, indeed, that
 ‘ this is a selfish consideration, and I cannot deny
 ‘ the accusation; but have this to answer in my
 ‘ defence, — however disagreeable the purport of
 ‘ my letters is, they shew, at least, the perfect
 ‘ confidence I have in your friendship and good-
 ‘ nature.

‘ I am apt to think, that before I tell you, you
 ‘ will suspect I am also deserted by Vanucius; and
 ‘ though I cannot be positive that such a conjecture
 ‘ would be entirely groundless, yet I have little

‘ reason

‘ reason to flatter myself with the contrary :—I
 ‘ have neither seen or heard from him for five
 ‘ whole days, and this morning he set out for Tun-
 ‘ bridge, without taking any other leave of me,
 ‘ than sending a slight excuse for not waiting on
 ‘ me before he went. But this is not all.—A rela-
 ‘ tion of his, who I know has always look’d upon
 ‘ his courtship to me with an evil eye, and had,
 ‘ not long ago, so great a quarrel with him on the
 ‘ occasion, that he was forbid his house, is now so
 ‘ far re-instated in his good graces as to be gone with
 ‘ him into the country ; and I do not doubt but will
 ‘ take this opportunity of filling his ears with a
 ‘ thousand stories to my disadvantage, as he has ever
 ‘ done since my first acquaintance with him.

‘ Thus, my dear Belinda, from having, as I
 ‘ thought, my choice of two of the best matches
 ‘ in town, I am likely to lose all hopes of both,
 ‘ and also to fall into the contempt and ridicule of
 ‘ those flirts who so lately envied my good fortune.
 ‘ This last circumstance is above all so truly mor-
 ‘ tifying, that after it I know not whether I shall
 ‘ ever be able to shew my face in any public as-
 ‘ sembly, but rather take the same pains to con-
 ‘ ceal myself, as once I did to be conspicuous :—
 ‘ but farewell; the more I reflect on these accidents,
 ‘ the less I am capable of restraining my passion
 ‘ enough to assure you, with how much sinc-
 ‘ rity I am, &c. SELIMA.’

LETTER VI.

‘ Dear BELINDA,

‘ I Expected no less from your known goodness,
 ‘ than the consolatory ideas you endeavour to in-
 ‘ spire me with :—you would fain persuade me
 ‘ that I have no reason for despair, and that the
 ‘ same beauty which attracted the hearts of Do-

‘ rantes

• rantes and Vanucius, will also gain others of equal estimation; but alas! I have too much experience of myself, and of what the world thinks of me, to entertain so flattering a hope.—You know very well, my dear, that on the first setting up for conquest, I shewed myself in all public places, and exposed to the view of all who saw me, almost every charm nature has bestowed upon me, yet never was address'd on the score of marriage by any but those two, whom I have now lost. Besides, I am now what they call blown upon; that admiration which my first appearance excited, wears off by my being so often seen; and I begin to be convinced, that it was more owing to the peculiarity of my dress and manner of behaviour, than to any real perfections of my person, that I was so much followed by a gaping multitude.

• You see how I am humbled: and, by what I have said may perhaps imagine, that I have so far done with the pride and vanities of the world, as to take up with a little mercer or woollen-draper, if such a one should offer; but do not harbour so despicable an opinion of your friend:—no, I will never sit behind a counter, nor be the wife of one that does:—but I need not make this declaration;—as matters stand, I am not likely to be the wife of any body; but still, with an inviolable respect, &c.

“ SELIMA.”

LETTER VII.

“ Dearest BELINDA,

“ NOW may all the gods of love and wit inspire my pen to describe to you as it deserves, the bleſſ'd reverse in my condition since the laſt melancholy epistle you received from me:—I was then plunged in the lowest pit of despair, and

and am now raised to the highest summit of human felicity :—in a word, I am the contracted spouse of Dorantes; and as soon as the preparation for our wedding can be got ready, shall be the declared ***** of *****. Methinks I see the surprise I put you in ;—you will doubtless cry out,—How can this be, when Dorantes has already confess'd himself the husband of another? It seems indeed a paradox, but stands in no need of school-learning to be explained, as you will presently discover.

After the loss of both my lovers, as I then imagined, I scarce did any thing but lie upon the bed, and weep for two whole days together :—my father, instead of saying any thing to console my afflictions, added to them by his reproaches :—he told me, that he knew what it would come to ; --that dressing myself up like a Bartholomew baby would never get me an husband, and such like stuff, as you know his low way of expressing himself ;—but, thank Heaven ! the tables are now turned upon him ; and if respect for my mamma did not restrain me, I should return his flouts with interest.

One afternoon, as I was sitting at the window with the sash up, musing on my unhappy fate, I saw Dorantes's chariot at the door ; while his footman knocked, he looked out and made me a very respectful bow ; I was amazed, but thought it would be too gross an affront to a man of his quality to be denied to him, as he saw I was at home ; nor had I time for such a thing, if I would have done it, for the maid who open'd the door, shew'd him directly up stairs. On his entrance, I assum'd one of those haughty airs which vulgar low-bred people are apt to call impudent and sawcy ; and with my head half turned another way, said to him, — “ I am surprised to see “ you

" you here, Dorantes, after the conversation you
" entertained me with at your last visit."

" Oh, Selima, reply'd he, I came not now to
" repeat the audacity I was then guilty of, nor to
" offend your ears with any future discourses of
" the like nature; but to beg pardon for the past,
" and hope that what I have to offer will make
" some atonement." " I do not comprehend
" your meaning, returned I; but whatever it may
" be, cannot think it becomes me to continue any
" correspondence with a married man, who has
" pretended to make his addresses to me." " I
" am not married, rejoined he eagerly; and the
" trial I made of your virtue adds a double lustre
" to the beauty that first inflamed me, and I am
" now much more your slave than ever." " Not
" married! cry'd I: — Why then did you tell
" me so?" — " Pardon the innocent imposition
" I practised on you, said he, kissing my hand; —
" I was willing to see in what manner you would
" resent it; — your behaviour has answered to
" my wish, and I now offer you a hand which I
" never had one thought or wish to dispose of to
" any other woman."

" Oh Belinda, how did my heart flutter at these
" words, as Semandra says in the play,

" I took them all, and died upon the sound:
" To the driv'n air my flying soul was fasten'd:
" Each charming syllable he spoke was mine."

" The many passionate and endearing things he
" said to me would not come within the compass
" of twenty letters; you must, therefore, till I
" have better opportunity of relating the particu-
" lars, content yourself with a brief summary of
" the whole; — which is this, that he is entirely
" at liberty to marry me, and he is resolved to do
" so; — that an agreement the same night was
" made

‘ made between us for that purpose ;—and that mamma and her good friend, who luckily happen’d to be with her, were call’d in to be witnesses of it.

‘ Since every thing has been settled thus happily for me, some people have been impertinent enough to assure me, that to their own knowledge Dorantes was married several years ago, and that his wife was still alive ;—but this gives me no manner of concern :—if there be any woman who has a claim of this nature on him, he has doubtless found means to prevail on her to relinquish it,---so I look upon it as none of my affair :---he marries me in the face of the world, has promised to present me at court, and while I enjoy the title of ***** of *****, and the grandeur annex’d to it, shall not trouble myself with any whispers that may go about the town in relation to the lawfulness or unlawfulness of my marriage.

‘ It is no inconsiderable addition to my contentment, to hear that you design to return to town in a short time : I long to see you, and to give you an airing in my own coach and six, with three flaunting footmen on the back of it: --- we shall cut a better figure, Belinda, than when we made our little excursions together in a mean dirty hack.---Oh, fortune !---fortune !---dear propitious fortune, how am I bound to praise thee!--- But no more at present, than that I am, with the greatest good wishes, &c.

‘ SELIMA.’

‘ P. S. I need not desire you to tell Philander what has happen’d ;---I know you will, and also that his regard for you will make him participate in the happiness of your friend. Once more, adieu.’

Here

Here end the letters of this celebrated lady, who
in a very little time after married Dorantes.



C H A P. II.

Consists chiefly of some Reflections of the Author's own on false Taste,—the mistaken Road in the Pursuit of Fame, and the Folly of an ill-directed Emulation; to which are added, a few faint Sketches taken from the most amiable Originals in modern Life.

THE celebrated De Buffy tells us, that when we say a man has a fine or true taste, no more is meant by those words, than that he has a sound judgment, a clear head, and a nicely distinguishing capacity in judging of what is really worthy and becoming, and what is not so, whether it be in the choice of his amusements, his equipage, his apparel, the furniture of his house, the covering of his table, or whatever else depends on the direction of the will and fancy. Now, as every thing is best shewn by its opposite, if the definition given us by the French author of the true taste be just, as I believe most people will allow it is, to think and act contrary to what he describes, is what we call false taste; but, in my opinion, to think and do always what is wrong, and at the same time imagine that all we think and do is right, is not of itself sufficient to take in the meaning of the phrase in its full extent:—there must always be added an affectation of being singular, over curious, over delicate, over elegant, somewhat above the common level of mankind: in fine, the man of a false taste must not be a fool of Heaven's making, but his own. The late witty Earl of Rochester has presented us with a very picturesque

picturesque character of the man of false taste, in the following lines :

He was a fool thro' choice, not want of wit;
 His foppery, without the help of sense,
 Could ne'er have risen to such excellence :
 Nature's as lame in making a true fop
 As a philosopher : the very top
 And dignity of folly we attain
 By studious search and labour of the brain ;
 By observation, counsel, and deep thought ;
 God never made a coxcomb worth a groat :
 We owe that name to industry and arts ;
 An eminent fool must be a man of parts.

A person may be endow'd with great talents, yet, through a false taste in the manner of displaying them, be render'd ridiculous instead of respectable, and while he aims at attracting universal admiration, become the object of universal contempt. Hippias is profoundly learned, is well skill'd in the most useful sciences, and endowed, both by nature and education, with every requisite to render him a worthy member of society ; yet by some unaccountable oddities of manners and behaviour, he makes himself hated where he might be loved, — despised where he might be respected, — and a mere cypher in a world where he might be a figure of the greatest consequence. He is not at all dissatisfied that every one knows and speaks of him as a man possess'd of a very opulent fortune, yet affects to look down with scorn on all the pleasures, and even innocent amusements it might afford him ; and to such an excess does he carry this humour, that whatever is beyond the necessities of nature he treats as luxury and epicurisms, vainly imagining, that the wearing of a thread-bare coat, and a wig that the head it covers

covers scarce ever remembers to have had a curl,
entitles him to the character of a philosopher.

But this ostentatious humility, as I think it may be justly call'd, is not the most unpardonable error into which Hippias is led by his false taste: — this serves only to make him ridiculous, but there is another which makes him hateful. The ambition he has of being reverenced as a stoic renders him deaf to the dictates of humanity, and wholly insensible of all social feeling for his fellow-creatures; — he partakes not in the joys or griefs of even those he calls his friends, nor would lift a finger, move a step, or speak a syllable, either to promote the one or dissipate the other: — the most distressful circumstance has not the power to touch his heart; and if any one knows him little enough to employ his assistance or advice in the extremest exigence, he replies, with a solemn and magisterial air, that he can say nothing to their complaints; that pity is a passion; and that by the force of his reason he has divested himself of all passions of what kind so-ever. Thus does Hippias, by indulging one unhappy propensity, forfeit all the love and esteem the qualities he is possess'd of would otherwise attract: — the manner in which he is now looked upon gives me room to suspect, that whenever he makes his exit from this world he will have an epitaph something like what I read on a tomb-stone in a country church yard:

Here ******, stretch'd at his full length is laid,
Whom, living, no one lov'd, or mourn'd when dead.

Numberless are the instances might be given to prove the best capacities may be, and frequently are, perverted by false taste and misapplication; — as one of our most eminent authors tells us, — the love of fame is the universal passion; —

it

it is imprinted, in a more or less degree, on every human heart; — those who have great talents are apt to think they can never render themselves sufficiently conspicuous ; and those of weaker intellects, yet possess'd of the same vanity, are sometimes so infatuated, as rather than not to make a noise in the world, do things which may incur a lampoon, since they cannot deserve a panegyric. A private life, or, as they term it, a life of obscurity, is to some people the greatest misfortune they can labour under ; they will tell you, that they may as well be out of the world, as of no consequence in it ; — and few there are who will take the poet's word for a contrary passion :

Th' unknown, untalk'd of man is only blest ;
No anxious doubts his peaceful breast annoy,
From praise and censure equally remote ;
Nor hope, nor fear, his happiness destroys,
But safe within himself, himself enjoys.

There are also people, who, having no peculiarities of their own, affect to imitate those they may see in others, especially if the person they copy after be of a superior rank, or has the reputation of a wit.— These may properly enough be called second-hand fools ; for they generally take up the follies just when they are left off by the persons they would be thought exactly to resemble ; — according to a vulgar adage, — ‘ The fool will sometimes peep out of the wisest man.’ — The least failing in a person of distinguished character is presently adopted by his inferiors 'till it becomes a fashion. Emulation, however, when well directed, is one of the most noble propensities of the mind; nothing can be more truly laudable than an endeavour to square our actions by a praise-worthy model ; — but I am sorry to say that this is not so often

often the case as every good man would wish it were.

There are some people so unhappy, as to take for a pattern all the bad they can find, and neglect all the good ; — and this too, without design or any untoward inclination, but through mere carelessness ; and provided they do something such-a-one or such-a-one does, give not themselves the trouble to examine whether what they imitate be a beauty or a blemish, or, indeed, whether it be either, or only a matter of indifference, and altogether unworthy of regard. And now I am upon this head, I cannot forbear relating an example of the sort I last mentioned; which, tho' it happen'd some years ago, and is extremely trifling in itself, may serve to shew how little care people sometimes take in their choice of an object for imitation.

A young gentleman of my acquaintance, and who pass'd in the world for a very pretty fellow, either was, or affected to be, because it was the mode, a prodigious admirer of the late deservedly famous Sir Isaac Newton ; — he had the honour of being known to that truly great man, frequently visited him, and had the opportunity of hearing many things from him, which doubtless were well worthy of being treasured in his memory ; — yet I could never find he took particular notice of any thing but this I am now going to repeat. — Sir Isaac had him at his table one day, and happen'd casually to say, that he thought nothing sweeter than a bacon bone : — my friend immediately catch'd up the word, and from that moment made it his own, and on all occasions quoted it. — If any one ask'd him to eat with them, he would reply, — ‘ Yes, if you have any bacon ; for, as Sir Isaac Newton says, there is nothing sweeter than a bacon

‘ bacon bone.’—In fine, he went to no place, mingled in no conversation, without finding some means to introduce the sweetnes of the bacon bone, and repeated the above mentioned expression so often, and so impertinently, that at last he became the jest of all his companions, who, in derision, call’d him by no other name than the bacon bone. Ridiculous as this may appear, I can assure my reader, that the gentleman I am speaking of does not stand alone, but has many parallels in my catalogue of observations on a misguided imitation, as I could easily prove: — but my humour has on a sudden changed its vein, and I begin to grow too serious to recite any farther instances of so ludicrous a nature. Degenerate as we mortals are said to be, yet even now there are not wanting some few illustrious examples of both, whom even an endeavour to copy after would be some merit in the attempt.

See where the noble Altamont stands forth a shining patron of exalted virtue; dignity in his countenance, benevolence in his hand, the strictest justice, honour, and social kindness in his heart.— Near him you will always find the chaste and fair Euphemia, his illustrious consort; — a numerous and beauteous offspring with joyous smiles play round their feet; — Juno and Hymen hover over their heads, and shower continual blessings on the happy pair. From Altamont and Euphemia,—ye husbands, fathers, learn the duties due to those endearing names; and cease to imagine that to swerve from them is politeness.

Learn you, who languish in a widow’d bed, from Elismonda learn to support the melancholy of your condition as becomes you: — Elismonda, who, though, as Lee expresses it, in all the full grown

grown pride of glorious beauty, disdains all overtures for a second marriage,—shuns pomp and ceremony,—nor haunts the court nor public walks, but in her closet ruiniates what good is in her power to do,—who most deserves, and who stands most in need of her relief; and all those cares she once employed to please the best of husbands, are now taken up with acts of piety and soft compassion.

Learn, ye fair ramblers after show and hurry,—ye midnight gadders to masquerades and balls, from lovely Amadea learn, the timid modesty that best befits and best secures the honour of a virgin state;—she takes no pains to attract the eyes of the gaping multitude, and rather shuns than covets popular admiration:—she avoids being the first in any new fashion, and never runs into the extreme of it;—goes to no routs, assemblies, or masquerades;—feldom indulges herself even with a play or opera, and when she does, is always accompanied by some grave relation, whose presence is a check on the impertinence of those whifflers, who skip from box to box, saying the same thing to every fine woman they see there:—when she walks in the Park, she makes choice of those hours when the least company are there, and the only public place you are sure to find her in is at church.

The example of Dorilaus is a noble reprimand to those who suffer themselves to grow old in riots and debaucheries:—early he quitted the levities of youth, and, as the silver swan immersing from the stream, shakes off the drops that hang upon its wings, so Dorilaus but dipp'd into the follies of the times, just tasted the licentious pleasures of the town, then despised and threw them from him

with abhorrence. Temptations of every kind have since surrounded him, yet has he still remained unmoved ; — equally inflexible to the insinuations of luxury, and to the bribes of corruption ; — steady in virtuous principles, the evil ones at length grew weary of their fruitless labour, and now suffer him to enjoy a calm and undisturbed repose, in the society of a few select friends, who join with him in commiserating the infatuation of others.

If there were no cards nor dice in the world, Favonius would be look'd upon as an almost faultless being, and the voice of envy have nothing wherewith to cast a blemish on his name : — it cannot be denied, however, that Favonius has wit, honour, generosity, affability, and an affected sweetness of disposition ; — qualifications which would greatly compensate for his love of gaming, if it were not for two considerations, — which are these : — First, That by indulging this unhappy propensity, he lavishes too much of that time which might be employ'd in the defence of the liberties of his country, and for the benefit of the commonwealth. Secondly, That his high character in the world makes many people ready, and even proud to follow his example in this, the sole error of which he can be accused, while they neglect the least endeavour to imitate any one of the numerous virtues he is master of.

There are many others of both sexes still living, whose characters would reflect honour on the imitators ; and some who, though the world has been so unfortunate as to lose, have left behind them such monuments of their virtues as never can be forgotten : their memory strikes a damp on guilt, and will eternally be venerated by all the wise and good. But this is a theme which, though perhaps little

little affecting to the greatest part of my readers, may yet be too melancholy to some others, as well as to myself; I shall therefore dwell no longer upon it, but return to a subject more suitable to the present disposition of the times, which I am not so ignorant as not to know an author ought always to consult, if he regards either his own reputation, or the interest of his bookseller.



C H A P. VII.

Gives a succinct Relation of two pretty extraordinary Adventures that presented themselves to the Author in a Morning Ramble.

A CLEAR and undisturbed sky, illuminated with a smiling sun, and perfumed with a thousand odours from the new budding spring, invited me to Hyde-Park.—I girded my Invisible Belt about me, for the reasons I have already mentioned in a preceding chapter, and also put my Tablets in my pocket, though I had not the least expectation of meeting with any thing in that place which should give me occasion to make use of them. The sweet solemnity of this solitude afforded me infinitely more pleasure than ever I had found in a crowded Mall:—it inspired me with the most delightful ideas, which indulging, I wander'd for I believe near two hours without meeting with any one object to interrupt my contemplations. How much longer I might have continued in this agreeable resverie, I know not; for I was rous'd from it by the sudden appearance of a gentleman at some distance from me, but who was advancing directly towards the path where I was:—on his approach, I stepp'd a little on one side, to prevent his running against me:—he walked backwards

wards and forwards with some emotion,—look'd often on his watch, and discover'd many signs of the utmost impatience. By the cockade in his hat, I doubted not of his being a military gentleman, and imagined that some dispute of honour was that morning to be decided by the sword; but I was soon convinced of my mistake, the officer having more of Cupid than of Mars in his head.

I had not been many minutes before a coach came up and stopp'd very near the place where I stood: — there were three women in it; one of whom, and much the richest dress'd, I presently knew to be the celebrated Lipathea;—the others, as I afterwards found, were her woman and nurse;—this, it seems, being the first time of her coming abroad since her bringing into the world a son and heir, to the great joy of that honourable family,—as the news writers express it. On sight of the coach, the young officer advanced briskly towards it.— Lipathea saw him at the same time, and thrusting out her head, and half her body, with her accustom'd loud laugh, call'd to him to come in. With these words the door was immediately open'd, the two women came out, and the officer jump'd in; —after which the coachman was order'd to drive as slow as he could to the Walnut-tree Walk, and so round to the Ha! Ha! wall, and back to the same place again.

I had no opportunity to follow them, so was obliged to content myself with hearing the discourse that pass'd between the two women who were left behind: — to this end I kept as close to them as I could, with my tablets in my hand; —but the subjects they talk'd on were so trifling, that I did not think it worth while to spread them for the impression of their words, till at once the nurse began,

began to run into a long detail of the particulars she knew, or could remember, that had happened in the several families where she had been; but the matters she related being wholly insignificant, and unworthy of record, I shut up my tablets, and gave no further ear to what she said. I quitted not the place, however, till the lovers returned from the tour they had been making: — the coach stopp'd, and the captain was set down near the end of the same path where he had been taken up, and Lipathea beckon'd her two attendants to come in, who by this time, I found, were heartily weary of their promenade.

The well-known character of Lipathea, one would think, should have hindered me from being much surprised at any thing she did; yet could I not be an eye-witness of the glaring affront she now put upon her husband, and the modesty of her sex, without being seized with a consternation impossible to be express'd. My meditations on this adventure had perhaps lasted 'till I came home, if they had not been interrupted by another which fell in my way, and afforded me, in its consequences, more matter for diversion than the former. — Beauty, or, what is more than beauty, the power of attraction, is not confin'd to persons of a high station; — nature can exert herself as much in the cottage as the palace, and we sometimes find more real graces under a plain homely coif, than under a fine gauze cap ornamented with jewels, — as the little incident I am about to rehearse will abundantly evince.

As I was passing through St. James's-Park, I met a young woman with a porringer in her hand, neatly covered with a large earthen saucer; — she advanc'd with slow and cautious steps, lest she

should spill any part of what she had brought: when she drew near the parade, a tall grenadier, who I found was her husband, stepp'd forth from among his comrades and receiv'd the mess from her, as also a pewter spoon, which she took out of her pocket, and gave to him at the same time. Though every thing about her was clean, yet the reader may easily suppose extremely mean:—she had a face, however, that stood in need of no advantages from dress to set it off;—never had I seen a finer pair of eyes, or a more soft and delicate complexion;—and, to crown all the rest of her perfections, there appear'd not only in her countenance, but in every little motion and gesture, that which, in my opinion, is the very soul of loveliness, a most perfect innocence and simplicity. I was not, however, the only admirer whom her charms that morning had attracted:—a certain officer of distinction, walking on the parade with another gentleman, having seen her at some distance, quitted his companion, and came to the grenadier, accosting him in these terms:

Officer. ‘ So, Grenadier,—you are taking your morning's refreshment:—Is this pretty damsel your wife?’

Grenadier. ‘ Yes, please your honour.’

Officer. ‘ She seems very young; you can't have been married long.’

Grenadier. ‘ About three months, please your honour.’

Officer. ‘ I hope you use her well;—I dare say she deserves it.’

Grenadier. ‘ I think she has no reason to complain, sir;—Have you, Peggy?’

Wife. ‘ No, indeed.’

Officer. ‘ I am glad of it;—I would always have the women used well.’

He said no more, but turned upon his heel, and walk'd away with a careless air, as if nothing farther than what he had made shew of were in his head; but I perceived he removed no farther than the end of the Canal, and kept an observant eye on those he had left behind. The grenadier having finished his little repast mingled with some soldiers who were on the Parade, and his wife tripp'd out of the Park with much more haste than she had come into it:—the officer, who had never lost sight of her, followed, though for a while at some distance, and I kept very near him, resolving to see what it was he aim'd at, and what would be the issue of his designs, in case he had any of the nature I suspected. She went through the Treasury, and when he saw she had enter'd there, mended his pace, and coming up with her under the arch'd passage, gave her a little slap on the shoulder:—she started and turn'd back, but on seeing him, dropp'd a low curtesy, while he spoke thus:

Officer. ‘ Well overtaken, pretty lass.—I wanted to speak to you,—I fancy I have seen you somewhere or other; — Pray what country-woman are you?’

Wife. ‘ I was born in Lancashire, — so please your honour.’

Officer. ‘ I thought so; for I have heard say all the Lancashire girls are very handsome.—And pray what brought you to London?’

Wife. ‘ The hopes of getting into a good service, please your honour; but not hearing of one presently, and happening to get acquainted with my husband in the mean time, I chang'd my condition.’

Officer. ‘ You did well; there is nothing like being your own mistress:—but you country

‘ folks are generally afraid of a red coat,—How
‘ came you to venture on a soldier?’

Wife. ‘ I don’t know, sir;—it was my fate, I
‘ think.’

Officer. ‘ Well, here is something to encourage
‘ you to love the army.’

With these words he drew a six-and-thirty piece
of gold out of his pocket, and made an offer of
putting it into her hands; but she drew back, either
asham’d or unwilling to accept it, and cry’d, ‘ Oh,
‘ sir, I have heard say, that women should never
‘ take money from the men.’ To which he re-
ply’d, ‘ That is from your mean dirty fellows; but
‘ it is ill manners to refuse any thing given you by
‘ your superiors.’ He now took hold of her hand,
and a second effort obliging her to receive his pre-
sent, she look’d on it, turn’d it two or three times,
and then said, ‘ Bless me,—what must I do with
‘ this great piece of money?’

Officer. ‘ Oh, you will find a use for it:—that
‘ pretty face of yours requir’s a thousand things
‘ that the grenadier’s pay will not enable him to
‘ purchase for you:—and now I think on it, ’tis
‘ pity he should continue in that low station;—I
‘ have it in my power to raise him, and I will
‘ do it;—he shall have a halbert forthwith;—but
‘ I must talk to you a little first upon that score.
‘ ——Where do you live? ——I will come and see
‘ you.’

Wife. ‘ Oh, dear sir,—we have not a place fit
‘ for your honour to come into.’

Officer. ‘ No matt’r for that,—I am not proud,
‘ and never scruple to go to any place, how mean
‘ soever it be, where I can either do a pleasure to
‘ myself, or a service to my friends;—therefore no
‘ excuses.’

Wife.

Wife. ‘ Your honour is very good ; — but I
‘ do not know how to tell you, for there is no sign
‘ near us : — we lodge up one pair of stairs at a
‘ button-maker’s, the next door but one to a
‘ chandler’s shop, in a little alley that turns out of
‘ King-street by a green-stall, and is no thorough-
‘ fare.’

Officer. ‘ I shall never find it by this direction ;
‘ —you shall shew me where it is now ? ’

Wife. ‘ Lord, sir, what will the people in the
‘ street say, to see me go cheek-by-jole with such
‘ a fine gentleman as your honour ? ’

Officer. ‘ Well then, you shall walk before, and
‘ I will follow you.’

Wife. ‘ But, sir, my room is all dirty, — I was
‘ just going home to clean it, — now I have carried
‘ my husband his breakfast.’

Officer. ‘ I shall not go in, nor visit you till af-
‘ ter dark, to hinder, as you say, the neighbours
‘ from staring at me : — I will come this evening
‘ about nine or ten o’clock ; — your husband is to
‘ be upon duty ; but do you take care not to be
‘ out of the way ; for it is absolutely necessary I
‘ should have some discourse with you before I do
‘ any thing for him.’

Wife. ‘ Lord, sir, what business can your honour
‘ have with me that he must not know ? ’

Officer. ‘ You may tell him afterwards, if you
‘ will : — but I won’t detain you any longer, — go
‘ home and please yourself that your husband shall
‘ be a serjeant to-morrow, and that I shall raise him
‘ still higher ; — so that he may come to be a cap-
‘ tain at last.’

Wife. ‘ A captain ! — oh la ! — I shou’d never
‘ have thought of such a thing.’

Officer. ‘ It all depends upon yourself, and what
‘ I have to communicate to you ; — so be sure be
‘ at home and alone when I come.’

Wife. ‘ Yes, please your honour, I would not
‘ for all the world be so rude as to disappoint you ;
‘ though I am ashamed you should come into such
‘ a poor habitation as mine.’

Officer. ‘ Never mind that, my pretty one, I
‘ shall look on nothing in the place but yourself.’

While he was speaking this, he cast his eyes about, and finding there was nobody in sight, gave her a kiss, after which she made a low curtsey, and turn’d away to go home, blushing all the way she went, like the sun through a gentle shower in an April morning.---He follow’d, as he said he would, ’till he had seen her enter into her little dwelling ; nor left the place ’till he had taken sufficient notice of every thing, to be able to remember and know it again. I was now under a most sensible concern for this poor young creature,—thus likely to be betrayed, not by any inclination to ill, but merely through the fear of offending a person above her ;—quite ignorant of the snares of the world, and untaught how to resist temptation, she was, alas, just ready to fall into a real fault, by an endeavour to avoid an imaginary one :—as Mr. Waller said, tho’ on a different occasion,

Innocence and youth oft makes
In artless virgins such mistakes.

Tho’ I had not the least doubt but that the young wife of the grenadier would become a prey to the vicious inclination of her seducer, yet I had the curiosity to see in what manner she would behave on the full discovery of his designs upon her. Accordingly I went about nine o’clock to the little alley, and posted myself on a bench at a door just opposite to the dwelling of the grenadier, resolving to go in with the officer when he should come. I had not waited above half an hour before he appeared ;—he was muffled up in his cloak ; but, by the help

of

of a small winking light from an adjacent shop, I easily knew him :— he had taken too much notice of the house to be mistaken in it, and entered directly, the door being left open, as I suppose, for that purpose :— I followed close behind him, but never had my Invisibility been in so much danger as it was now brought into by this adventure.

The grenadier, it seems, having been informed by his wife of every thing that had passed between her and the officer, and more zealous in the defence of his honour, than perhaps some in a much higher station would have been, had prevailed, for some pots of beer, on a brother grenadier to do duty for him that night ; so returned home before the hour appointed for his rival's approach, and having arm'd himself with a good oaken cudgel, stood on the middle of the stairs, ready to give a proper reception to that invader of his rights. My leader had not advanced above five or six steps of the stairs, when he received a violent blow on the head, which, together with the surprize it gave him, made him reel back, and like to fall on the poor Invisible ; but I hastily and prudently withdrew to the middle of the entry, and stood aloof to hear, at a more safe distance, what would be the end of this affair. The grenadier pursued his strokes, and the officer, being in no condition to defend himself in that disadvantageous posture, thought it best to make his escape ; but not having been accustomed to such steep winding stairs, fell down to the bottom ; — his antagonist, though better acquainted with the passage, in attempting to follow him had the same fate ; but being uppermost, soon recovered himself, and catching hold of the officer by the collar as he was endeavouring to rise, forced him on his knees, and continued buffeting him on the head and face, till he was covered all over with the blood

blood that gushed from his nose and mouth, as I afterwards perceived..

The officer made several efforts to draw his sword, and at length did so ; but the other finding what he was about, immediately seized it by the hilt, wrested it from him, snapped it asunder with his foot, and threw it over his head. — ‘ Rascal, will you murder me ? cry’d the officer. — No, replied the grenadier, I will only cool your courage, and make you remember running after other men’s wives. — Dog, — do you know who I am ? demanded he ? — I only know you for a villain, said the other, that would defraud my wife, and as such I’ll use you. — Sirrah, returned the officer, I will make you pay dearly for this insolence ; — you know well enough that I am *****. — You lye, rejoined the other, and deserve to be hanged for taking such a gentleman’s name in your mouth ; ***** would scorn to sneak into such a poor hut as this to seduce any man’s wife.’ The grenadier’s hands were not idle all this time ; but the officer having at length got upon his feet, they continued wrestling together for some minutes, in which combat the furious husband had much the better, which put me in mind of what Mr. Rowe says in Jane Shore :

In spite of birth and dignity, a man
Oppos’d against a man, is but a man.

The officer now finding himself quite disabled, and being still under the gripe of his unrelenting enemy, called vehemently out for help ; on which several of the neighbours ran in with lighted candles in their hands, and the entry was presently full of men, women, and children : — but never was such a spectacle as this demolished beau. — ‘ Bless me !

' me ! what is the matter ? cry'd one ; — What is the matter ?' — ' Ask no questions, — here is half a crown for any one that will get me a chair immediately,' said he ; and the word was scarce out of his mouth, before a cobler ran with all the speed he could to do as he desired. The grenadier now affected the utmost surprize, and said, — ' All the world should never have made me believe it was your honour ; — I protest I took you for a rogue that wanted to come to bed to my wife while I was abroad, and thought I could not use such a one too ill.' — The women, on hearing this, guess'd how the business was, and looked at one another and grinn'd ; — one of them, however, was so charitable as to fetch a bowl of water to wash the blood off his face and garments ; — he made use of what she brought, but gave no other answer to what the grenadier had said, than a look full of resentment and confusion.

A chair being brought, he catched up his hat and wig, which had fallen off in the scuffle, went into it, leaving behind him sufficient matter to employ the conversation of the whole alley for a long time. — On hearing afterwards the whole truth of the affair from the grenadier and his wife, every one applauded the conduct of them both, and laughed heartily at the disappointment and correction of the laicivious officer. For my own part, after I got hoine, the satisfaction of finding myself safe from the dangers into which my curiosity had brought me, was succeeded by some considerations on the passages I had been witness of, and I could not help being filled with the utmost astonishment, that persons endowed with a liberal education, and from whom much greater things might be expected, should, for the sake of gratifying a foolish inclination, the fleeting pleasure of a moment, not only

be

be guilty of the greatest injustice to others, but also
of the most abject demeaning of themselves.

C H A P. VIII.

*Is calculated rather for Admonition than Entertainment,
and therefore likely to be but little relished.*

HO W vainly do we boast the light of reason, when we refuse to submit either our wills or actions to the guidance of its direction, when thro' every stage of life we suffer some darling passion to gain a dominion over us, and utterly extinguish that glorious lamp we seem so proud of, and would be thought so eminently to possess above the rest of the creation ! Prodigality is generally the vice of youth, and avarice of age ; but though both these propensities proceed from a wrong turn of mind, and are diametrically opposite to sound judgment, yet I think somewhat more may be said in excuse of the one than of the other.—The prodigal lavishes his stores in such things as do a pleasure to himself ; and if he squanders away his patrimony in riotous living, and becomes miserable in the end, there are some who profit by his misfortunes ; — his money circulates, and the public suffer nothing by his private ruin.—The miser, on the contrary, not only denies himself all enjoyment of the goods of fortune, but also withholds them, as much as in his power, from every one else ; — he parts with nothing he can get into his clutches, amasses heaps of treasure, and smiles with a wicked satisfaction to see it lie rusting in his coffers, while numbers of his fellow-creatures are perishing for want of it.

Avarice, above all other passions, so takes up the soul, that it leaves not the least room for any of
the

the nobler sensations ;—love, friendship, pity, and even natural affection are excluded thence : — the covetous man regards only the gratification of that one sordid view ; all his fears, his hopes, his cares, are centered there, and he seldom sticks at any thing to obtain it. Besides, what can be more absurd in itself than for people to labour with all their might in heaping riches, which they neither use, nor can assure themselves but that the next moment may dispossess them of ? And it is remarkable, that the nearer they approach to the time when they can expect no other than to be snatched for ever from the idol they had worshipp'd, they grow the more eager to preserve it. — The condition of those children who have the misfortune to be descended from parents of the humour I am speaking of, can never be too much commiserated, especially if they happen to be born with notions more just and elevated ; — an instance of which kind I am now going to relate.

A gentleman, whom I shall distinguish by the name of Avario, is sprung from a very ancient family in the West of England, has a large estate, and might have been beloved and respected by his neighbours, if the excessive parsimoniousness of his disposition did not make him do things which demean his rank, and even render him contemptible in the eyes both of his equals and inferiors. — He was married in his youth to a lady of birth and fortune, but had no child for near twelve years ; at which time, however, she brought a son into the world, which one would imagine should have fill'd the father's heart with the highest satisfaction ; but instead of thanking Providence for sending him an heir of his own bowels for his estate, he only repined at the additional expence the new comer must necessarily occasion. — His lady was sensibly afflicted.

afflicted at the little notice he took of the young Clyamon, for so the son of this unworthy father was called ; but when she reproached him with his unkindness, he only gave her this churlish answer : — That he saw no cause for any great rejoicing ; for he supposed, as she had now began to teen, he should in a few years have more children than he should be able to maintain.

Clyamon, notwithstanding, grew a very fine boy ; but he woul^t have had little to boast of from education, if his uncle by the mother's side, who was exceeding rich, and had no children, had not conce^ved a more than ordinary affection for him, and resolved to bestow on him all those advantages which were denied to him by the niggardly disposition of his father. He told Avario, that if he would trust him with his son, he would breed him as his own, and take care he should want for none of those accomplishments which constitute the truly fine gentleman, in case he were capable of receiving them ; which, added he, I do not at all doubt of, from the early promise of his childhood. This offer was too agreeable to both the parents not to be readily accepted : — the father rejoiced at being eased of an expence he could not foresee without regret ; and the mother was highly pleased to think that her little darling would now receive a more polite education than she could hope the too great frugality of her husband would have allowed him.

Clyamon was about ten years of age when sir Arthur Frankwill, for so his worthy uncle was call'd, took him under his protection, and carry'd him to a fine seat he had about twelve miles distant from Avario's. — Doubly happy for him was now this change in his situation ; for his mother dying soon after his removal, he would doubtless have been deprived of many indulgencies he had hitherto enjoyed at home ; — but which were abundantly

abundantly made up to him by the tender affection he was treated with by the good baronet. — Sir Arthur not approving of any of the schools in that part of the country, sent him to Eton, under the conduct of a faithful old servant: — and in that place it was he received his first rudiments of learning. The improvements he made there were such as did honour to the masters as well as to his own capacity; — the accounts those gentlemen gave of him in their letters to sir Arthur, were confirm'd by their pupil's behaviour whenever the times of breaking up gave him the liberty of going into the country. Both uncle and father were surprised on finding the swift progress he made in his learning; — the one was charm'd with the success of his endeavours, and the other quite transported that his son was in a fair way of being possess'd of so many accomplishments without any cost to himself.

Having perfected himself in all he could be taught at Eton, he quitted the school, by his uncle's permission, and return'd to the West; where, after having staid some time to make an acquaintance with the gentry, and take such diversions as the country afforded, his uncle thought proper he should finish his studies in one of the Universities, and for some reasons which he had within himself, made choice of Oxford.—Clyamon accordingly went thither at the age of eighteen, and had the good fortune to have for his tutor a gentleman of deep learning, a keen discernment, and an unprejudiced judgment, who inspired him with such principles of justice and true honour, as I believe he will never depart from. The admonitions of this worthy tutor, joined to a natural love of virtue in himself, entirely preserved him from running into any of those excesses too many of his age are guilty of; — though nothing could be more gay and spirited,

rited, yet every thing he said or did was govern'd by a certain decorum, without seeming to be so.— He could be cheerful among the men of his acquaintance, without immorality or prophaneness ; —courtly among the ladies, without flattery or insincerity ; respectful to his superiors, and maintain a proper distance to those below him, without pride or ill-nature :—in fine, his character and manners were such as made him highly esteemed by all the wise and good, and beloved even by those who would not be at the pains to imitate him.

After a stay of about three years at the university, he return'd to Sir Arthur's ; for that kind uncle and patron would needs have him continue to look upon his house as his chief home ; nor did Avario at all oppose this motion, tho' he was now extremely proud of his son, went often to see him, and would always make him a present at every public assembly or meeting in which he was himself a party. It is certain, indeed, never any young gentleman was more happy or contented in his mind than Clyamon at the time I am speaking of ; — he had but one wish beyond what he already possess'd, and that remained no longer ungratified than while he forbore to mention it. He was as well acquainted as books could make him, with most foreign parts ; especially with those kingdoms and states which compose this quarter of the globe ; but when he considered that the best description cannot but fall infinitely short of the prospect, he was very desirous of being an eye-witness of those things and places he had read of.

Sir Arthur highly approved of his nephew's inclination to travel ; —it seem'd laudable to him, as he had himself often thought it was the only thing wanting to complete his other accomplishments ; and one day, as they were talking on that subject, ‘ My dear Clyamon, said he, the desire

‘ you

you have of seeing the world is truly praiseworthy, and I think you cannot better employ two or three of those years which I hope Heaven has allotted for you, than in visiting the several courts of Europe: — it will enlarge your ideas; and the difference of their manners and polices will, I doubt not, enable you to make such observations as may hereafter be of service to your country. I think (pursued he) there is no necessity of putting you under the care of any person by way of governor; — you are now arrived at years, and I flatter myself, at discretion enough to be trusted by yourself; — as to the rest, you may depend that I shall spare nothing to render the tour you make agreeable to you, and that whatever remittances you shall have occasion for, from time to time, shall be punctually sent to you on a letter of advice.

This crown'd all the other favours Clyamon had receiv'd from his indulgent uncle; and, it is not to be doubted, drew from him the most grateful acknowledgments: — it was necessary, however, Avario should be consulted: — the matter accordingly was proposed to him, on which he testified that he was not void of natural affection by the reluctance he express'd for exposing so deserving a son to the dangers of travelling; but the arguments urged by Sir Arthur, and the entreaties of Clyamon, at length prevailed on him to consent. Clyamon soon made it appear that it was not to gratify a vain unprofitable curiosity, but the laudable ambition of improving his mind, that had made him so desirous of going abroad: — the letters he wrote to his father and uncle, from France, Italy, Sweden, and several parts of Germany, would have been very well worth inserting in this work; but, to the misfortune of the public, I was not then in possession of my wonderful Tablets, and tho' I heard them

them read more than once, can remember little of the particulars they contain. This worthy young gentleman had glean'd from every field he passed through whatever he found capable of increasing the treasures of his mind ; and in somewhat more than two years return'd to England, full fraught, though not burthened with understanding, and an experience far above his years.

I might here entertain my reader with the joy he was received with by his father and uncle, the compliments made to him by the gentry in that part of the country, and acclamations of the lower sort of people :—but I have no time to waste in such minute particulars, and must proceed to more material circumstances. — Clyamon had no great relish for the country : he soon grew weary of its amusements ; he lov'd company, and had been accustom'd to a good deal, both at Oxford, as well as while he was on his travels, and on account of the great distance between the gent'lemen's seats in that country, his uncle's love of retirement, and his father's parsimony, neither of their houses were much frequented :— he wanted to come to London ;— he had never been three whole weeks together in it, and thought he ought to be better acquainted with what was done in the capital of the kingdom. — Sir Arthur was also willing he should be known in a place where the accomplishments he had given him might be rendered more conspicuous ; but as he had more than performed the part of an uncle, and fully discharged him of the promise he had made to Avario concerning his education, he thought it was now high time for that gentleman to take upon him the father, and make a settlement for his son sufficient to enable him to appear in the world according to the estate he was born to inherit. — This proposition was not altogether so pleasing to Avario as it ought to have been ; but as he

he could find nothing to alledge against the reasonableness of it, he only evaded complying with it at present, by some trifling excuse or other, till Clyamon, unable to conceal his discontent, Sir Arthur press'd more strenuously in his favour than he had done before, and at length, though with much difficulty, drew from that niggardly parent the scanty sum of fifty guineas.—This was a light loading for the purse of a young gentleman bred in the manner Clyamon had been, and could not be expected to hold out long in so expensive a town as London:—Avario, however, accompanied it with a promise of letting him have more as soon as he received money from his tenants, who, he pretended, had been tardy in their payments of late, and occasioned his being very much out of cash.

Clyamon could not keep himself from being extremely shocked at this treatment from a father, who had been at no expence for him since he was ten years old:—Sir Arthur was no less chagrin'd, though he concealed it from his nephew, and putting a Bank bill of fifty pounds into his hand, said to him,—‘ My dear Clyamon, I would not have you be disconcerted,—you know your father’s temper; but the more he hoards, the more will be your own at his decease:—in the mean time be assured I will not forsake you;—I will continually urge him on your behalf, and also privately supply you whenever he is deficient;—live therefore like yourself, and be entirely easy.’ These comfortable words, from a mouth on which he knew he might depend, made Clyamon set out chearfully for London; but what happened to him after his arrival, must be the subject of another chapter.

C H A P. IX.

Is a Continuance of what the former but began.

THO' Clyamon never had an opportunity of making much acquaintance in this metropolis, and now arrived here at a season in which great part of the nobility and gentry retire to their country seats, yet was he soon known, and his conversation courted by those of the best rank, who still remained in town. There were no operas indeed, no plays, no masquerades to entertain him; but the gardens of Ranelagh, Vauxhall, and Mary-le-bon; or, to speak more properly, the gay company that frequent those places, left him no want of any other amusement.—The love of pleasure can never continue ungratified in a town like this: and it is not to be wonder'd at, if it sometimes got the better of all Clyamon's discretion, nor, if surrounded with temptations, that he could not always keep himself from giving way to passions, which in youth, and a sprightly disposition, are so natural, that they scarcely deserve the name of faults. It is not my business to detain the reader's attention with an account of his gallantries with the fair sex, if any of the particulars had come to my knowledge, which I freely confess they did not:—I shall only say, that he had no amour which could call his honour in question, bring him into quarrels, or be productive of any other unhappy consequences.

The only mistake in conduct he had any great reason to repent of, he was led into more by the prevalence of example than inclination: — he had never been in the least tainted with that epidemic vice,

vice, the love of gaming, and rather wonder'd at the pleasure he saw it gave others, than desired to be partaker of it himself; — yet did he inadvertently suffer himself one evening to engage in a party at that dangerous amusement, which he knew had proved so fatal to many of the most opulent fortunes, and utterly unsuitable to a person in his present circumstances. The persons he play'd with were well experienced, and great proficients in their arts; — they let him win at first some pieces, and this imaginary success luring him to go on, he became at length a loser about seventy pounds; — a trifling sum to a gentleman of his appearance, yet three times more than he at that time was master of.

He dissembled his chagrin as well as he was able, but confess'd he had not that sum about him, and would send it the next morning; — on which they told him his honour was a sufficient stake for ten times as much as he had lost, and would fain have prevailed with him to have play'd on; but he now saw the folly he had been guilty of, so pretending he had business, took leave of the company, carrying with him a humour very different from what he had brought, and from what he had ever been possess'd of in his whole life before. Impossible it is to express, as he afterwards told me, how much he was disconcerted at this unlucky event; — he knew it was expected he should promise to send the money next morning; and by what means he should acquit himself of that promise, and redeem his honour, puzzled him to a degree that made him almost distracted. He has often protested that he never closed his eyes in sleep during that whole night, but pass'd his restless hours in contriving how to extricate himself from the labyrinth into which he had so foolishly

stray'd.—After much revolving in his mind, he at last bethought himself of borrowing the sum he wanted of a young gentleman with whom he was extremely intimate, and who had a good fortune.

Pursuant to this resolution, he rose the next morning more early than he was accustom'd, and went to his friend, who was not yet stirring; but on saying he had business of consequence to impart to him, was easily admitted to his chamber.— He told him, in few words, what had happened, the vexatious situation he was in, and the necessity he was under of borrowing a small sum, 'till he could receive a remittance from the country;— to which the other replied, ‘Upon my soul, dear Clyamon, I should be glad to serve you on this occasion;—but, 'faith, it is not in my power at present;—it is not a week ago since I lost five hundred pounds at that damn'd whist:— and this, with some other demands lately made upon me, have quite drain'd me of all my ready cash:—but I will tell you what I can do for you;—I know a man who has often supplied me and several of my acquaintance, when they have had a bad run at play;—he has always money by him, and will lend you what sum you please on your advancing a premium;— I will rise this minute, and go with you to him.’

Clyamon was highly pleased at this offer, and while the other was dressing, reflected within himself how his affairs stood, and that, the little presents he had received from his father and uncle being now almost exhausted, he should soon have calls for more money than his gaming debt, thought it best, since he must borrow, to borrow as much as would supply his expences 'till his father should be prevail'd upon to make him a settlement, which he flatter'd himself would be in a short

a short time. He communicated his intentions to the gentleman, who approved it, and having got himself ready, they went together to old Grub, for so the usurer was called. The wretch was just coming out of his house when they came to it.—On seeing them, he turn'd back, and conducted them into a little dirty parlour; but as the discourse that pass'd between them was somewhat extraordinary, I thought it worth writing down, as Clyamon some time after repeated it to me word for word :

Grub. ‘ So, my young ’squire,—’tis a wonder to see you out of your bed before the sun has run three quarters of his course at least;—‘ I suppose you want a little of my assistance that brings you abroad thus early?’

Gentleman. ‘ No, ’faith, Grub, not at present; but I have a friend here that does.’

Grub. ‘ Your friend is welcome,—I will serve him if I can.—Pray, sir, what can I do for you?’

Clyamon. ‘ Sir, a present emergency lays me under a necessity of raising two hundred pounds immediately;—if you have that sum by you, this gentleman will inform you who I am, and that I want neither the power nor the will to discharge any obligation I shall enter into on that score.’

Gentleman. Ay, ay, Grub,—his note is as good as the Bank of England,—you need not fear your money, — his name is ****, — he is an only son and heir to near two thousand pounds a year.’

Grub. ‘ The gentleman has an honest face, indeed.’

Gentleman. ‘ If you have any scruple, Grub, I will join in the note with all my soul.’

Grub. ‘ I believe there is no great occasion ;
‘ only in case of accidents, a collateral security
‘ may be necessary.’

Gentleman. ‘ Well,—well,—you shall have it.’

Grub. ‘ I suppose, sir, you have acquainted the
‘ gentleman with the common way of dealing in
‘ these affairs ?’

Clyamon. ‘ Sir, I am willing to allow you any
‘ interest for your money that you can in reason
‘ desire.’

Grub. ‘ Sir, I am never out of reason with any
‘ man : — as to interest, it is quite out of the
‘ question ; — I shall take no more than what the
‘ law allows ; but when we advance money upon
‘ a pinch, a certain premium is expected.’

Clyamon. ‘ Please to name it.’

Grub. ‘ Let me see ; — you want two hun-
‘ dred pounds immediately, you say : — it is but
‘ a trifling sum, indeed ; but too much for a poor,
‘ man like me to lose ; — we who lend money
‘ this way run a great risque ; — not that I doubt
‘ you, nor am unwilling to advance the money ;
‘ but I think you can do no less than add an odd
‘ fifty in the note you make.’

Clyamon. ‘ How, sir ! — fifty pounds for the
‘ loan of two hundred, besides the interest !’

Grub. ‘ Look ye, sir, I would not have you
‘ imagine I deal hardly with you ; — if you
‘ brought me a note on the best tradesman in the
‘ city, payable one month after date, I do assure
‘ you that I would not discount it a farthing less
‘ than twenty per cent.—Consider, sir, I may lie
‘ a great while out of my money ; — disappoint-
‘ ments sometimes happen, and when they do, I
‘ have not the heart to be severe in point of time.
‘ I scorn to distress a gentleman when I find he has
‘ it not in his power to pay, unless I hear he is
‘ going out of the kingdom, or to enter into the

‘ army

‘ army; and then, indeed, it behoves me to take
‘ care of myself.’

Clyamon, in favouring me with the recital of this dialogue, told me, that he had not presence enough of mind to keep the shock he felt at so exorbitant a demand from being visible to the usurer, who looking on him with no very pleasing aspect, said to him,

Grub. ‘ I perceive you are dissatisfied, sir, and
‘ if so, I can keep my money, and you may try
‘ to supply yourself at a cheaper rate elsewhere:—
‘ for my part, I am at no loss how to dispose of
‘ the little I have;—there are enow will be glad
‘ to receive it on the terms I offer’d you, and it
‘ may be, not grumble to allow me a better ad-
‘ vantage.’

Gentleman. ‘ Nay,—pshaw,—prithee, Grub,
‘ don’t be out of humour;—my friend is not ac-
‘ custom’d to these things, and I had not time to
‘ inform him before we came.’

Grub. ‘ Sir, I bear a conscience, and am above
‘ imposing on any one;—I am ashamed to think
‘ of what is practised at some great coffee-houses
‘ that shall be nameless, where, if a gentleman is
‘ necessitated to borrow ten pieces, he returns
‘ twenty for it the next morning, or it may be the
‘ same night;—no,—no—such things are
‘ an abomination to me;—I desire no more
‘ than a living profit, and whoever does not ap-
‘ prove of my conditions, is at liberty to reject
‘ them;—there is no harm done.’

Clyamon. ‘ Not in the least, sir; and as this is the
‘ first time I ever had occasion to become a bor-
‘ rower, and was utterly ignorant of the methods
‘ I should take in such a situation, I may deserve
‘ forgiveness.’

Thus was poor Clyamon compell'd, by his impatience to discharge his debt of honour, to acquiesce to the excuse made for him by his friend, and comply with the extortioner's demand ; — on which Grub was easily brought into temper again ; — a note was presently drawn for the sum of two hundred and fifty pounds, and being signed by both the gentlemen, the whole sum mentioned in it was delivered to Clyamon, who put two hundred pounds into his pocket, and returned the other fifty to Grub.—‘ This, sir,’ said the old wary curmudgeon, ‘ I receive as a present from you, ‘ and thank you for it.’ Clyamon also, in his turn, thanked him for the favour he had just conferred upon him ; after which they departed, seemingly with the most perfect good-will towards each other ; but it is at ruth almost unquestionable, that the lender of this money had infinitely more satisfaction in his mind than the borrower could possibly have. Dearly, indeed, did he pay for the means of discharging an obligation which his inadvertency had brought him under ; — it was, however, of this service to him, that it made him detest high gaming ever since, and be careful to avoid all company that might draw him into a second misfortune of the same kind, — as I remember to have formerly read in a very old, and now almost exploded author :

Wise is the man, who by one error taught,
No more is in the same temptation caught.

There is a way of refraining from being guilty of indiscreet actions, without affecting to be over-wise.—Clyamon had this happy talent ; — he knew very well, that for a person of his years to set up for a dictator, instead of reforming his companions, would only incur their ridicule ; and therefore contented himself with not making a party in the

the modish vices and follies he was spectator of, without seeming to condemn or to be displeased at them. Conscious that, on his first arrival in town, he had not taken all the care he should have done to regulate his way of living according to his present circumstances, he began to retrench his expences as much as possibly he could, without letting the world see he did so, or sinking too much beneath the character of a gentleman born to inherit the ample fortune he was. But in spite of this somewhat too late assumed œconomy, he soon found himself in very great necessity for a fresh supply:—he had been in London from the latter end of May to the beginning of October, and had received no remittances from the country since he left it;—all his uncle's remonstrances had not yet prevailed upon his father to make the proposed settlement on him; the usurer's loan was quite exhausted, and he had, besides, other small debts to his tradesmen, some of whom had already sent in their bills.

To add to these vexations, Grub visited him almost every day, complained he was out of cash himself, and at length grew very importunate, and plainly told him, that he could lie no longer out of his money, and that if he did not speedily discharge the note, he must take proper measures to force him to it. In this exigence, he wrote a very pressing letter to his father, intreating an order on his banker in London; but the obdurate Avario only sent him an answer to this effect:—that it was inconvenient for him to break into the sum in the hands of his banker,—said he must wait awhile,—that he should be in town himself the ensuing November, on the meeting of the parliament,—and that then he would do something for him;—in the mean time bid him live sparingly, and shun

all places and company that might draw him into any unnecessary expence.

Poor Clyamon had need enough for all that stock of spirits which nature had endued him with, to enable him to bear up amidst the persecutions of his voracious creditors, and the unnatural behaviour of his father; — he had now no other resource remaining, than an application to sir Arthur, but very loth he was to be troublesome to that dear and beneficent uncle, to whom alone he was indehted for what he looked upon as infinitely more valuable than his being, his education; and was with much debate within himself, whether it were not better to endure the insults he was expos'd to, rather than run the risque of displeasing a patron he had so much cause to love and reverence. But while he continued thus irresolute in his mind, an accident happened which put a final end to all the contention in his thoughts on that score, by presenting him with a misfortune, which was the more severe, by its being sudden and unapprehended.

The good sir Arthur Frankwill died; — fate snatched him from the world at once, without the least previous warning, and allowed no time for the making bequests, either to his beloved Clyamon, or any other person, whom else he might have thought worthy of a place in his remembrance; — so that leaving no will behind him, his whole estate, together with all the personal effects he was possessed of, devolved on a son of his elder sister, as being the first of blood and heir at law, — a gentleman who had always looked upon Clyamon with too envious an eye to have any sincere friendship for him. The first account of this misfortune was transmitted to Clyamon in a letter from the above-mentioned kinsman, and contained the following lines:

• Dear

‘ Dear Cousin,

‘ THIS comes to acquaint you with the loss
 ‘ we both sustain by the death of our dear uncle,
 ‘ who departed this life six days ago; — he was
 ‘ seized with an apoplectic fit, out of which he
 ‘ never recovered, in spite of all the endeavours
 ‘ that could be used.—I did not send to desire your
 ‘ company at the funeral, as it would have been a
 ‘ superfluous compliment to him, and a great fa-
 ‘ tigue and expence to yourself, in coming so long a
 ‘ journey; but as I am sensible of the affection he
 ‘ had always for you, I enclose a Bank bill of
 ‘ twenty pounds for mourning. I intend to dis-
 ‘ pose of my uncle’s house as soon as I can hear of
 ‘ a purchaser, and am now sending away all the
 ‘ furniture, so can make no invitation to you to
 ‘ come hither; shall be glad if you will pass a few
 ‘ days with me at T—, on your return into the
 ‘ country.—So the hurry I am in at present per-
 ‘ mits me to add no more, than that I am, &c.

‘ G. HAWKSMORE.’

It is certain at this time, and indeed almost at any other, there were few things could have happened more unfortunate for Clyamon than the death of his uncle, as he had not only lost in him an indulgent parent, a tender friend, and a kind protector, who had promised never to forsake him, but also the only person in the world who had the most influence over his father, and by whose intercession he hoped to have been soon relieved from the precarious situation he was at present in. He had scarce time to recover himself from the first emotions of grief, on the above-mentioned melancholy account, when he receiv’d private intelligence that Grub intended to arrest him, and had even employed a sheriff’s officer for that purpose:—he

had no way to prevent this affront, but by flying for revenge to the verge of the court, which he accordingly did, and took a lodging in Scotland-yard.—Grub soon heard of his retreat, traced him to his asylum, and endeavoured by all the means he could to render it of no service to him; but Clyamon had laid his case before the board of green-cloth, who had assured him of their protection, till the arrival of his father should discharge this troublesome affair.

The time was now near in which Avario was expected, and he staid not many days beyond it; but his presence rather augmented than put an end to the distress of Clyamon. That unnatural parent, on finding the condition he was in, flew into the extremest rage;—reproached his extravagancies, as he call'd them, in the most bitter terms;—swore he would see him sink under the calamity to which he had reduced himself, rather than give a single guinea to relieve him from it;—and even curs'd the memory of the good sir Arthur for having indulged him, as he said, in notions so contrary to what he ought to have been inspired with:—it was in vain that Clyamon endeavoured to alleviate his fury;—he would hearken to no excuses,—be softened by no submissions he could make.—One of the gentlemen of the honourable board, on Clyamon's request, urged the defence of that young gentleman in the strongest terms; but Avario for many days continued deaf to all remonstrances in his behalf, and gave no other answer, than that, as his son had brought himself into this trouble by his folly, he must endeavour to get out of it by his wit. This cruel sarcasm, when repeated to Clyamon, made him almost forget the duty of a son, and, as he confess'd to me, ready to burst into exclamations, which he would afterwards have reproached himself

self for having been guilty of uttering, or even thinking of.

Grub, and some other of his creditors, finding they could do no more to him in the place where he was, took their revenge in persecuting him with unceasing clamours, which threw him sometimes into such fits of melancholy, as, if he had not been furnished with a great stock of morality and good sense, would doubtless have pushed him on some desperate method to end those misfortunes which he saw no probability of being removed from.

—Avario, in the mean time, notwithstanding his churlish and sordid disposition, was far from being easy in his mind; —the first gust of passion being blown over, the merits of Clyamon rose in opposition to the fault he had been guilty of, and made it, by degrees, seem less: —he could not forbear remembering that he was his son, and such a son, as every one who was a father wished his own might copy after. In fine, nature and reason joined their forces, and pleaded strongly in behalf of Clyamon, and almost wrought him to forgiveness; but as often as he reflected how much it would cost to pardon him, and that he could not receive him into favour without payment of his debts, the thoughts of parting with his money gave a sudden check to his paternal inclinations.

At length, however, some hints which Clyamon dropp'd in one of the many petitionary letters he sent to him, making him apprehensive that the most dreadful consequences might attend the despair of his offending son, he became determined to do something for him. He sent a person to him with ten guineas for his present support, and an offer of making up his affairs, in case he could prevail on his creditors to compound for the one half of what was owing to them; —Clyamon accepted his father's present, trifling as it was, with submission;

but could not forbear testifying the utmost disdain at proposing of a composition ; for besides being certain that it would never be complied with, the thing itself appeared to him so abject, that he chose to suffer any thing rather than demean himself to mention it. This refusal put Avario into a second flame ; but he soon cool'd again, and after some little conflict within himself, the necessity there was of restoring the liberty of an only son got the better of his love of money. Loth, however, to part with his darling pence as long as there was a possibility of keeping them, he found out an expedient to protract the doing a thing so irksome to him ;—he communicated his intentions to Clyamon in a letter, which that young gentleman shewing me afterwards, I found contained words to this effect :

‘ Son,

‘ THO’ I have been justly irritated against you, first by your extravagancies, and since by your late obstinacy, yet I cannot forget I am your father, nor suffer you to sink beneath those misfortunes your folly and disobedience have brought you into :—I have resolved to pay all your debts before I leave London ; but as it is not convenient for me to do it sooner, would not have you venture out of the verge, for fear of bringing yourself into disgrace, and an additional expence on me for your release ;—in the mean time am content to allow you two guineas and a half per week, for the sustenance of yourself and servant. It is expected we shall be dissolved about the middle of February, when writs will be issued out for a new election ; and I shall then set you clear in the world, and take you home with me ; for I do not think it adviseable you should live in this luxurious town, ’till you are better acquainted with the true value of money than you seem

‘ seem to be at present : I hope, notwithstanding,
‘ that your future behaviour will atone for the er-
‘ rors of the past, and I shall have no occasion to
‘ repent the proof I now give you of being your
‘ affectionate father,

‘ AVARIO.’

The joy Clyamon would have felt, on finding full satisfaction would be given to the demands of his impatient creditors, was very much abated by the thoughts of being obliged to reside constantly with his father in the country, as the manner in which he knew he must live would be very disagreeable to his humour, and widely different from what he had been accustom'd to with his uncle. It also seemed a little hard to him, that by delaying the discharge of his debts till his departure, he should be secluded from all enjoyment of the pleasures of the town, even while he continued in it : —but he saw into the policy of his father in doing this, and as there was no remedy, endeavoured to be as contented as possible. In the answer he gave to his father's letter, he expressed himself in terms highly pleasing to him, and brought on a perfect reconciliation, as will presently appear, on occasion of an accident which happened soon after.



C H A P. X.

Concludes a Narrative which has somewhat in it that will, in a Manner, compel those who shall be most offended to counterfeit an Approbation, for the Sake of their own Reputation.

THO' the greatest intimacy with Clyamon, and a long acquaintance with Avario, made me no stranger even to the minutest particulars of the transaction I am relating, I mean, as far as I could be

be informed, by the perfect confidence with which I was honour'd by both these gentlemen ; yet, as no sure dependance can be placed either on what people say of themselves, or the report given of them by others, I should never have ventured to speak so positively in many things as I have done, if the gift of Invisibility had not afforded me an opportunity of accompanying them when they thought themselves entirely alone, and of beholding them in those unguarded attitudes which are the best, and only certain discoveries of the inward workings of the human mind.

It was my dear Belt could have alone convinced me that, contrary to the general opinion of the world, it was not ill-nature in Avario, or the ignorance of what he ought to do, which had hindered him from being an affectionate husband, a tender father, a faithful friend, and an indulgent master ; but merely his inordinate love of money, and an unaccountable apprehension of being reduced to the want of it, that made him center his whole cares in his bags, regardless of all the ties of blood and nature, and render'd him almost incapable of practising any social virtue.

It was by this beneficial present that I became assured Clyamon was much more worthy than he took any pains to appear ; — that in all serious matters he was steady and unshaken, and in his pleasures decent and well manner'd ; — and that, young as he was, he had set up a tribunal in his own heart, where reason, presiding as his sole judge, carefully examined all his actions, and whatever unruly passion had got the start, stopp'd it in its career, and brought it back to obedience.

Many interesting circumstances, relating to this affair, between father and son, are lost to the public by my having been deprived for some time of my Crystalline Tablets, which had been stolen from me,

me, with several other things of much less, tho' more seeming value, by an unfaithful servant; but the villain finding, I suppose, that he could make nothing of the Tablets, and looking upon them only as a curiosity which would please nobody so much as myself, seal'd them up, and caused them to be left for me at a coffee-house: — my joy at getting them again made me forgive the rest of the robbery, and seek no farther after the thief. I recovered my purloined treasure just about the time that Clyamon was in the above-mention'd situation; so that what remains to be recited of this narrative, will be chiefly taken from the mouths of the persons concern'd in it. I was one morning in Clyamon's apartment, under the cover of my Belt, when a young gentleman of the name of Careless came to visit him; — after exchanging the bon jour, and some other customary salutations, Careless began the conversation between them in these terms:

Careless. “ Where do you think I was yesterday ? ”

Clyamon. “ I am no conjurer.”

Careless. “ Guess.”

Clyamon. “ It would be a needless trouble; — prithee spare it me.”

Careless. “ Why, 'faith, in the gallery of the House of Commons.”

Clyamon. “ The House of Commons! — it must be a business of vast importance sure, that could carry a fellow of thy gay sprightly temper into that grave venerable place.”

Careless. “ No, thank Heaven, business and I are perfect strangers to each other; but I had an hour or two upon my hands, and went thither merely to kill time: — but was never more diverted in my whole life, than to see how some

“ young

‘ young members, who had got their heads together, and were giggling over a copy of verses inscribed to Fanny Murray, were put to silence in an instant, and look’d as silly as a school-boy under the lash of correction, on the speaker’s crying out with an audible and austere voice,—“ To order, gentlemen,—for shame,—to order.”

Clyamon. ‘ Methinks, indeed, they might have found a more proper place and time for laughter. —Was my father in the House, pray ?’

Careless. ‘ O yes, and I assure you the old gentleman made as wise a figure as any there ;— he said nothing, indeed, but sat as serious as a judge upon a criminal cause, leaning both his hands upon his gold-headed cane, and his chin upon his hands, and listening with great attention to a very long, and I suppose, learned harangue of a leading member. How do you design to dispose of yourself to day ?’

Clyamon. ‘ I have not yet consider’d.’

Careless. ‘ Tis a glorious morning ; — are you for the Park ? — I come on purpose to ask you.’

Clyamon. ‘ With all my heart.’

Careless. ‘ Come along then, — I dare swear the Mall is half full by this time ; — let us go, and laugh at the great vulgar and the small, — as Cowley says.’

Just as they were going out of the room a letter was presented to Clyamon from his father, which he turning back to read ; I stepp’d behind him, and found it contain’d these lines :

‘ Dear CLY,

‘ I Have something to impart to you, which is of the utmost consequence to my peace of mind, and your future happiness ; — be careful, therefore,

fore, not to be out of the way to-morrow morning, when I shall call upon you as I go to the House; for what I have to propose cannot be settled too soon.—Be assured I am impatient to see you make as good a figure in the world as I think you deserve, and that no more is required of you than a just sense of your duty to me, and a regard for what is your own interest, to preserve me always your very indulgent and loving father,

‘ AVARIO.’

Clyamon was so transported with the kindness of this epistle, that he could not forbear shewing it to Careless, who, knowing the temper of Avario, had no sooner look'd over than he said :

Careless. ‘ I will lay my life upon it, that the old gentleman has found out some rich widow or heiress for you, with whose fortune you may make a figure in the world, and save his own till he can keep it no longer.’

Clyamon. ‘ I hope not so, for as yet I have no inclination to marry; and whenever I do, shall like to have a wife of my own chusing.’

Careless. ‘ You must be cautious, nevertheless, not to venture a second brûlée with him; for he seems to have set his heart very much upon this business, whatever it is that he has now got into his head.’

Clyamon. ‘ Deuce take you for putting it into mine;—but I will think no more on it:—if the thing should be as you imagine, I shall have time enough to be uneasy after knowing it;—but come,—’tis almost two o'clock,—let us away.’

With

With these words they went to the Mall, and I returned home ; where reflecting, as I always did after these excursions, on what I had seen and heard, I could not help being of the same opinion with Mr. Careless, as touching the intentions of Avario, and fear'd that poor Clyamon, with all his merit, would be obliged to become a prey to some old well jointur'd Jezebel, or rich Dowdy, who ow'd her virginity to her ugliness. — By what I have often freely confessed concerning the inquisitiveness of my disposition, the reader will easily suppose I felt no small impatience for the event of Avario's visit to his son ; and indeed I believe that young gentleman himself could scarce be more anxious. That I might lose nothing of what should pass between them, I took care to post myself very early in Clyamon's apartment, and it was well I did so, both for the satisfaction of my own curiosity, and the emolument of the public ; — for Avario came in presently after me.

As they had not seen each other for some time, Clyamon threw himself on his knees, and in that posture thank'd his father for the pardon he had vouchsafed to his offence, as well as for his kind promise he had given for the discharge of his debts. Avario seemed very much pleased with this submission, raised and embraced him with great affection, and after they were seated, replied to what he had said in these terms :

Avario. ‘ It is a great deal of money, indeed, ‘ the folly you have been guilty of will cost me ; ‘ but it is the first, and I flatter myself will be the ‘ last I shall have to complain of, — so we will say ‘ no more of what is past : — I came now to talk ‘ with you on a subject more agreeable to us both.’

Clyamon.

Clyamon. ‘ I have the greatest reason in the world, sir, to hope every thing from your goodness.’

Avario. ‘ Ay, Clyamon,—you are my only son,—you may be sure I have nothing so much at heart as your welfare, and I think I have now hit upon something that will make you as happy as you can wish to be. Your late uncle, sir Arthur, was always teasing me on the score of a constant allowance for you out of my estate, to the end you might be in a manner independent, and I have at length resolved to do it.’

Clyamon. ‘ Whatever you are pleased to grant, sir, I shall take care to employ so as to give you no cause to repent your bounty.’

Avario. ‘ But that is not all, Clyamon;—what I shall do for you will put you in a way of making yourself a much greater man than you would be by what you will enjoy on my decease.’

Clyamon. ‘ I am not ambitious, sir, but shall readily embrace any laudable means of raising my fortune.’

Avario. ‘ Why that’s well said, and what I have to propose is not only laudable but honourable too:—it is this,—you shall be a member of the House of Commons.’

Clyamon. ‘ Sir, I shall be proud to serve my country in any capacity; but in this fear my youth and inexperience will be very just objections.’

Avario. ‘ Tut,—tut,—there are much younger than you in the House, and tho’ I say it, of much less understanding too.—As to the forms that are to be observed there, I can instruct you in them;—and as to the rest, you will easily come into it of yourself;—therefore no more of such idle scruples:—an over-modesty and

‘ and diffidence of yourself is the worst quality a man that aims to rise in the world can be posseſſ'd of. — I have considered on this matter in all its circumstances, before I mentioned it to you ; and in order to qualify you for a Member, have resolved to affign over to you five hundred pounds per annum of my estate.’

Clyamon. ‘ That, sir, is more than I could have presumed to ask.’

Avario. ‘ I mean, the rents of so much shall be received in your name ;—as to the cash, I think it much safer in my own hands than yours ; but you shall want nothing that is necessary, and when the business of Parliament calls you to London, give you leave to draw upon me for what sum, or sums, you shall find occasion for in reason.’

Clyamon. ‘ This, sir, is far from putting me out of a state of dependance.’

Avario. ‘ You ought not to desire it ; your uncle talk'd foolishly, very foolishly on this head ; and if it had not been for the obligation I had to him on the score of your education, I should have told him so :—a son ought always to be dependent on his father, and I think you have very great cause to be content in being so, as you have experienced the paternal affection I have for you, by my readiness to forgive your faults, and to discharge those debts your extravagancies had contracted.’

Clyamon. ‘ Sir, I shall always retain a grateful sense of all you have done for me ; — but, pray, sir, since it is your pleasure that I should be a Candidate at the ensuing Election, what Place have you in your eye for me ? — I suppose for some Borough.’

Avario. ‘ No, no,—for our own County.’

Clyamon. ‘ Then, sir, do you decline standing yourself ?’

Avario.

Avario. ‘ Yes, Clyamon.—I grow old, and am weary of the fatigue of coming up to London once every year; — I find it very expensive, as well as troublesome; for tho’ I board while I am here at a pretty cheap rate, with one that was formerly my servant, yet I know not how it is, money runs strangely away in this town; —besides, I do not think I have been well used, —I have had the honour of representing the County of **** in three successive Parliaments, and have got nothing by it, — but the honour; —and tho’ I have constantly voted on the side of the court, and whenever any debate of consequence was to come upon the carpet, have always previously attended the levee of the Minister, to know his will and pleasure; all the recompence I have had has been sometimes a shake of the hand, a gracious nod, a smile, and, how does my good friend Avario?’

Clyamon. ‘ You amaze me, sir; — I never imagined a gentleman had any other interest in his Election, than the pleasure of having an opportunity to serve his Country.’

Avario. ‘ Serve his Country! — a fiddle on the Country; — it would be well worth a gentleman’s while, indeed, to cajole, treat, and bribe every little dirty fellow that has a vote to give, — to spend so much time and money, and, if may be, drink himself half dead into the bargain at his Election, if it were not for the sake of serving himself, instead of the rabble who make choice of him for their Representative; — no, no, boy,—if we had not honour, favour, and preferment in view, our Electors would be obliged to court us to accept their Votes, not we to solicit them.’

Clyamon. ‘ But, sir, supposing this to be the case, how do you think it possible I should acquire

‘ quire any of those advantages which you say you have failed in the pursuit of yourself?’

Avario. ‘ I’ll tell you, Clyamon, — I could only give my bare vote for or against any question ; — I never had the gift of either speaking or writing ; — now I am pretty sure you can do both ; and a pathetic speech, or a strong pamphlet, are prevailing arguments with the Ministry ; — a man that can do these may have any thing, — may make his own price ; — so, Cly, it will be your own fault if in a Sessions or two you are not above receiving any assistance from me.’

Clyamon. ‘ Sir, I shall be always ready to exert the little talents I am master of to promote whatever I think is for the good of the Commonwealth.’

Avario. ‘ Tut, — what have you to do with the Commonwealth ? — you are not to set up for a judge of what is for its good, or what is not so ; your business is to please the Minister, and to think every thing right he takes upon him to maintain.’

Clyamon. ‘ But, sir, how is this consistent with my conscience or my honour ? ’

Avario. ‘ Idle, very idle ; — I do not like these notions, Clyamon, — they may tempt you to an opposition ; — I shall be afraid you are a Jacobite.’

Clyamon. ‘ Why, sir, are all men of honour Jacobites ? ’

Avario. ‘ No ; — but this romantic, unprofitable honour you talk of, is either Jacobitism or something as bad ; — enthusiasm and bigotry. — Is not the Court the source of true honour ? — Do not all honours, dignities, and promotions flow from thence ? — Therefore I say, whoever is against the Court will never rise to honour, or any thing else that is valuable.’

Clyamon.

Clyamon. Sir, you may be perfectly assur'd that
 ‘ I shall always do my best in support of every
 ‘ measure which tends to the real honour of his
 ‘ Majesty, and the good of my Country ; and
 ‘ never oppose any which does not oppose the
 ‘ Constitution.’

Avario. ‘ But you must not examine too scrupulously into these things ; — you are to suppose
 ‘ that those who are entrusted with the management of Public Affairs are better acquainted with
 ‘ the Constitution than you can pretend to be ; and
 ‘ must therefore take it for granted, that whatever
 ‘ they say or do is right.’

Clyamon. ‘ But, sir, does not this implicit faith
 ‘ in the judgment of others, and giving up my
 ‘ own entirely, favour somewhat of a slavish sub-
 ‘ mission ? ’

Avario. ‘ No, it is only good policy, and
 ‘ look’d upon as such by all who know the world ;
 ‘ — indeed, if after your Voting, Speaking, and
 ‘ Writing, they should take no notice of you, it
 ‘ would behove you to pluck up a spirit, and extort
 ‘ that respect to your resentment, which th^t were
 ‘ not grateful enough to pay to your complaisance.
 ‘ — I shall then give you leave to oppose them in
 ‘ every thing, whether it be wrong or whether it
 ‘ be right.’

Clyamon. ‘ But would not this changing sides, sir,
 ‘ make me become contemptible to both Parties ? ’

Avario. ‘ Not at all ; it is a thing too commonly practised to be wonder’d at, and has often
 ‘ had a very good effect when nothing else would
 ‘ do : — Publico, for example : — it was a good
 ‘ while, indeed, before they bid up to his price ;
 ‘ but he found it necessary at last, and he now
 ‘ enjoys the fruits of his labour.’

Clyamon. ‘ Yes, sir, I have heard of many
 ‘ others who have been bought off the same way ;
 ‘ but

‘ but whatever has been done in former administrations, I hope the present will attempt nothing that ought to be opposed.’

Avario. ‘ No, no, — you are not to suppose they will ; unless, as I just now observed, they force you to it by neglecting to recompence your services.’

Clyamon. ‘ According to this, sir, it will be very difficult, if not altogether impossible, for the people to distinguish between those who would defend, and those who would betray and sacrifice the Liberties of their Constituents.’

Avario. ‘ If the people are betray’d and sacrificed, as you call it, they can blame nobody but themselves.—Why do they take money for their Votes ? Why do they, like Esau, sell their birthrights for a mess of pottage ? — When a gentleman buys a County, a Borough, or a Corporation, he has, doubtless, a right to make the most of it he can.’

Clyamon. ‘ This, sir, is punishing Corruption with Corruption.’

Avario. ‘ Ay ; — Is it not just it should be so ? — Lookye, Clyamon, you are a novice in these affairs as yet, but a little time will make them familiar to you ; — I do not doubt but I shall hear of your being closeted by the great man ; and when once you are closeted, your business is done ; — you will have no farther occasion for my instructions or assistance either ; — but I shall say no more at present on that head ; — you must think of preparing yourself to set out on your journey to *****, in a day or two.’

Clyamon. ‘ What, sir, before you go ?

Avario. ‘ Yes, yes, — we shall not be dissolved so soon as we expected ; — I do not believe I shall be able to get down these six weeks or two months ; — there have been some odd turns of late ; — but

‘ but no matter, they are secrets, and must be kept so ;—but it is highly necessary you should begin to make your interest ;—you are already known to the greatest part of the gentry, and I am pretty sure they will all be for you to a man.—You must cultivate an acquaintance with the freeholders, ride about among them, invite some of the most leading men home, treat them handsomely, and make little presents to their wives and daughters, of snuff-boxes, rings, necklaces, and such toys to please their fancies :—I will get a friend of mine to purchase a cargo of them for you to take down, and will write to my steward to furnish you with what money you shall have occasion for.’

Clyamon. ‘ Do they know, sir, that you intend to decline standing any more ?’

Avario. ‘ Not yet ; but I shall write to-night to inform them of it, and to urge all my friends in your behalf :—I hear your cousin Hawksmore has taken it into his head to offer himself as a candidate, and tho’ he is not beloved on account of the bustle he made about turnpikes, yet the large estate he is now in possession of, by the death of Sir Arthur, may give him an influence over some people,—so there is no time to be lost ;—I would have you leave London on Monday next.—I have given orders that all your creditors shall be paid their full demands this day, and I think you can have no other business of consequence to detain you here.’

Clyamon. ‘ None at all, sir.’

Avario. ‘ Well then, what friends you have to take leave of, you may see this afternoon, and come to dine with me to-morrow ;—it is Sunday, and you know is a leisure day, and I shall be at home :—tho’ I am a boarder, I believe you

' will be welcome,—or it may be I shall add a dish
' to the table ;—therefore do not fail to come.'

Clyamon. ' You may depend, sir, that this com-
' mand is too agreeable to me not to be punctually
' obey'd.'

The old gentleman then said no more, but after giving his son a gracious nod, went out of the room, with a countenance which denoted the most perfect satisfaction of mind.—Clyamon waited on him down stairs, and I intended to follow as soon as his return should give me an opportunity of going down; but was retarded by Mr. Careless, who came in immediately after Avario was out of the house. This gentleman, who it seems has a sincere friendship for Clyamon, had been extremely impatient, and indeed more anxious than could have been expected, from a person of his gay thoughtless disposition, to know the event of the letter he had received from his father, had been come to the house some time, and waited in the parlour till the departure of Avario made it proper for him to appear. Almost the first salutation he gave to Clyamon contain'd an entreaty for the satisfaction of his curiosity in this point, which the other very readily complied with in general terms; but had too much discretion to expose his father's mercenary views, or by relating the design he had of making him a member of parliament, reveal the motives he had for doing so, or the instructions he had given him for his behaviour after he should be elected.

Mr. Careless, after having congratulated his friend on his being re-established in the good graces of his father, and the honour that was about to recede to him, said a great many pleasant and spirited things to him, on the occasion of his being likely to become a member of that august and respectable assembly. But the particulars of this discourse,

course, entertaining as it was, I am entirely unable to repeat, my Tablets being already crowded with the preceding dialogue ; and all I can remember is, that the two gentlemen after chatting away an hour, agreed to dine together that day, and to that end adjourned to a tavern in the neighbourhood, leaving me at liberty to retire to my own apartment. I was extremely pleased with finding, by what I had seen that day of Clyamon, that I had not been deceived in the high raised expectations I had entertained of his good sense and probity ; and also with perceiving that Avario, in spite of his sordid and avaritious disposition, could not help allowing the merits of a son, whose sentiments and principles were in almost every thing so directly opposite to his own.

The evening of the next day this worthy young gentleman call'd upon me, as he return'd from having pass'd the former part of it with his father : —he was much less reserved with me than he had been with Mr. Careless, which convinced me he knew how to refrain unbosoming himself to those whose solidity he had cause to doubt, and took a pleasure in being entirely open to those on whom he could depend that his confidence would not be abused, either by wantonness or neglect. He repeated to me the rules prescribed to him by his father for the regulation of his conduct in parliament, and express'd the little obligation he thought himself under to him on that score, in terms the most strong and pathetic : —these are some of his words :
‘ —The love of my country (said he) I look upon
‘ as the first and greatest moral duty of mankind ;
‘ —and I think I may venture to assure myself,
‘ that I shall never be tempted to renounce it on
‘ the prospect of any advantage offer'd, in what
‘ shape soever.’

I then

I then told him, that I believed the bulk of the people owed the grievances they complained of greatly to the luxury of their representatives, who having impair'd their estates in the modish excesses of the times, found themselves under a necessity of entering into measures which otherwise they would never have complied with. ‘ Perhaps too, added ‘ I, to gratify the ambition of a beloved wife or ‘ prevent the clamour of a turbulent one, may be ‘ one reason to which the infringement of public ‘ liberty may be ascribed.’ Clyamon listened with great attention to what I said, and joining in my opinion, replied, that his own observation of some late instances confirmed the truth of this argument: — ‘ The first of these excitements, continued he, ‘ I have already experienced the danger of through ‘ my inadvertency, and shall be wary to avoid the ‘ snare in which I have been once entangled; — ‘ and as for the other, if ever I marry, shall endeavour to get a wife as near as possible to the description given by the poet of his mistress: —

A maid
Who knows not courts, yet courts does far outshine:
In ev'ry starry beauty of the mind;
One who array'd in native loveliness,
And sweet simplicity, despises art;
And has a soul too great to stoop to pride,
With the mean ways by which it aims at grandeur..

With these discourses we pass'd the time he staid; — I have not seen him since, but heard of his safe arrival at ****: — Whether he will be elected for that county cannot be determined at the time of my writing this; so can only say, that if he is, I doubt not but his character will appear to much more advantage than in the feint sketch I have here been able to give of it.

END of the FIRST VOLUME.



